



Aqeel Ruby's personality is prismatic. As the different colors dazzle the eye, the many-splendoured Aqeel Ruby reflects the possession and understanding of poetry, drama, criticism, teaching, music, short story, novel and other branches of knowledge. He has the knack of creating a startling impression through his brilliant conversation.

And now, as a biographer of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, he has emerged in a new light.

Aqeel Ruby has presented Nusrat's life into chapters dealing with his ancestors, his early life, great struggle, artistic development, national and international fame, and his personal life. He has skillfully divided these chapters into Prologue, Dialogue, Loud Whispers, and Epilogue, thus giving an original style and shape to the art of biography.

Aqeel Ruby's style is simple, effective and interesting. It is full of mythical and emotional content. He has spread variegated aspects of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's personality in the book like splashes of color on a canvas.

As the reader connects these elements together, an attractive, touching and complete picture emerges. There is a magical impact to Ruby's style.

Really it is Ruby's touch of class.

Uxi Mufti

NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN  
A Living Legend

AHMED AQIL RUBI

WOW

# NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN - A Living Legend



AHMED AQIL RUBI  
SAJJAD HAIDER MALIK

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**WORDS OF WISDOM**

318-BADAR BLOCK, ALLAMA IQBAL TOWN, LAHORE.

To my mother

who is  
no more



# NUSTRAT

Fateh Ali Khan

## CONTENTS

1	PREFACE	7
2	PROLOGUE	15
3	ANCESTORS	33
4	DIALOGUE	75
5	LOUD WHISPERS	121
6	EPILOGUE	179



## PREFACE

## PREFACE

Every great Artist is a born genius. Great art is inherently noble and sublime. It transports the audience into a state of sublimity, ecstasy, sweet-agony, inner-harmony and peace. Such is the effect of the " Chorus Singing " called " Qawwali " by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He has become a legend of our times, in his unique combination of " Traditional Ragas " with modern beat of western orchestra. The classical singing is traditionally slow; yet its adaptation to the fast rhythm of rock-music is no less than a modern marvel of East-West cultural blend. Indeed a quaint synthesis: Nusrat Fateh Ali is the topical symbol of this exquisite East-West synthesis and the growth of individual talent from an inherent classicist to a " mod-vocalist " of the orient, gaining growing appeal even to the continental, Japanese and trans-Atlantic folklore and



country - music. There is a strange magic in his voice which is beyond analysis. He simply kicks-up his audience into a world of intense ecstasy and inspiration. He carries them along and makes them cry and weep at will, with the rise and fall of his tone and tunes. He has brought the classical singing to the common man, through the medium of "Qawwali" on present day musical rhythm, from the elite corridors of youth patronage "religious hyping" to the streets of late 20th century "Pop and Rock" generations - the world over. He has the singular distinction of getting recognition, overseas earlier than at home. This speaks for the sad-saga of our general; no less in particular. Technically speaking, the turns and twists of his vocal chords, the rendition of classical tunes to "rock" beat of different climes, the adaptation of "orchestra symphonies to ragas of "yore" and above all the sublimity of his spiritual singing, the modulation of myriad moods, the inspirational blend of "agony and ecstasy" in his "hymns" is more than mere singing or professionals gimmicks. It is voyaging into the cult of "flight to the unseen" from the world of "seen"; the ecstatic metamorphosis of mind, moods and soul, into a celestial being, where senses get suspended; where willing suspension of disbelief is carried away by "make-believe" of higher form of all great religious, poetry, paintings, sculpture and music. This is the stage, where even birds fall to the tune of the "hymns" of David, and to the rise and fall of Nero's lute. It is here that humans cease to be mortals and get merged into the

moments of creative-lore of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. It is no accident; it is by birth; the collective unconscious of his spiritually committed ancestors, who sang the hymns of Allah, the Holy Prophet, the great Ali and the descendants of the Prophet - reviving the traditions of great faith in the unseen through musical modes and higher art forms. Such forces only operate in dreams. One such dream changed the fate and future of Nusrat Fateh Ali's - epoch - making a singing - spree thereafter. It looks all too-well, really divine - ordained. Psyches the power of prayer, through "Qawwali" and "miscellany" by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. To call him a singing "Buddha" - is rather a pictorial - truth, placed beyond the borders of his performance and given "Forms". An archetypal symbol indeed. The credit for his vernacular introduction of Japanese, Spanish, French, German, English and many other writing on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, goes to Mr. Ahmed Aqeel Rubi a renowned professor of Literature and Poetry; who has innate sense of music and classical "ragas" as well. His dexterity of understanding and perception of Nusrat Fateh Ali's artistic - dimensions in all its spiritual, poetic and modulatory - forms and modules, defies a parallel in the realm of writers, all over, so far. He has pioneered "vernacular thrust" in Urdu, as a creative - biographer of Nusrat's great art of vocal - worship on versatile musical patterns, which has mobilized the mob, all over, the world. The writer has been original in very many ways, while writing about the origin, the ancestral



background, the turning point, the stepping stones to Nusrat Fateh Ali's saga of success right - through odds, as a misplaced talent forced to be a doctor by his father, yet destined to be a great artist at the end of the road. The biographer Mr. Rubi has touched a few subtle themes of "self made" man and the artist, the unseen corners of his person, the dark-shades of professional jealousy, the social barriers, the governmental non-patronage ; yet, the great vocalist rose above himself and difficult times, to the sad surprise of his foes and friends alike. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, the myth and reality "the man and the artist" the lore and the legend is all what Prof. Aqeel Rubi has very creatively highlighted in his writings on the artist. In addition to his translations of different articles on Nusrat in French, Spanish, Japanese, English etc. to Urdu, he has made original efforts to explore Nusrat - as man in the making and as an artist in the throes of rebirth - over the years; growing out of inherent traditions to topical trends of our times. He has drawn the analogy of "family tree of tradition" of classical chorus "singing heritage called "Qawwali" as a spiritual inspirational mystical strain of "Islamic renaissance" in the sub-continent Indo-Pak - by his father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, who was an outstanding classicist in mystical singing in King's court and religious "Darbars" and "Mazars" of great spiritual leading-lights mentioned in the book. Nusrat got his inspiration from his childhood vision of his great father's performances; yet turning to the tunes of his own times, by captivating the lost-

generation of the standard youth, and not only repelling the culture invasion of the western music and art, but conquering the west also with a difference by fostering his individual talent in the field. It reminds us of T.S. Elliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent", - the process of growth being identical. The writer has bewitchingly portrayed Nusrat Fateh Ali the man, the artist his rich-heritage, the spiritual ethos, the "Pop" adaptation, the rendition of ragas on fast modern beat - the myth and the reality Par excellence. He has thus gone beyond "the seen" to the "unseen" and helped the audience to look beyond "the given". No gain saying that Nusrat Fateh Ali has become a legend of our time ; a trend-setter in unique and exquisite blend of ragas on fast beat, a versatile epoch-maker in "Modern Qawwali" bound to lit up the dark recesses of modern mind and sensibility. It therefore brings the tranquility and transformation to the distressed souls. He is indeed the best throw up of our times in this field and Prof. Aqeel Rubi has masterminded a splendid piece of work even for a man in the street. The best message is perhaps as Japanese have said for Nusrat Fateh Ali "EKI MASHOO" i.e. "Let us Go" - for the new food of soul. As shakespear said, "If music be the food of soul, then, play on, play on, play on"

LAHORE.

ZULFIQAR ALI

## PROLOGUE



Quotation for Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan biography  
20 July 1992

Nusrat is one of the greatest singers of our time. When his singing takes off, his voice embodies soulfulness and spirituality like no other. It has been an honour for me to work with him.

*Peter Gabriel*

PETER GABRIEL  
DIRECTOR WOMAD

Richard Henderson recently sent me a chapter of a book called Shadow Dancing in the U.S.A. by Michael Ventura, to read on the plane to New Orleans.

The chapter is called Hear That Long Snake Moan. It's about the origins of rock and roll being found in the Voodoo ceremonies that were only allowed in New Orleans.

Ventura frequently claims that an essential component of American music is the African concept that the physical and spiritual worlds are not separated but are intersect. Heaven is not above with the earth below, and the trance experienced by intense dancing is a visit to the world of the spirit.

I think much of what he says about the blues, gospel, soul, and rock and roll, applies to the music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Nusrat somehow reaches listeners on an emotional and spiritual level that seems to be universal.

In his voice I find a kind of direct communication that seldom fails to move me deeply.

MICHAEL BROOK  
MUSICIAN AND PRODUCER FROM BRAIN ENO

One of the superstars of World Music, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is acknowledged as the greatest living master of Qawwali-the sacred devotional music of the Sufis which the Pakistani classical masters of the illustrious family of Khan has been developing for over six centuries. He is possessed of a voice of such incredible emotion, intensity and beauty that listeners are swept into ecstatic heights of consciousness.

ROB BROOKMAN  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ADELAIDE FESTIVAL



We look forward to every new opportunity to work together with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and party and very much hope to be able to introduce many more international audiences to the wonder of Qawwali music as expressed by him. We take this opportunity to congratulate Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan on his outstanding achievements in music and his diplomatic presence in the world today as an outstanding cultural ambassador of Pakistan.

Thomas Brooman  
Managing & Artistic Director  
WOMAD

PAKISTANI singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and his ensemble have become one of the most popular acts the WOMAD organisation (World of Music and Dance) has brought to a wider audience. Nusrat's stunning interpretation of Qawwali, Sufi devotional music origination from tenth-century Persia, has brought him rapid international acclaim

PAUL LASHMER  
MUSIC CRITIC

When Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan sings, unsuspecting Western audiences are mesmerised. To naive ears, Nusrat's exalted, euphoric delivery of Qawwali - the uplifting devotional music of the Sufis - is new and exotic. But such terms draw a warm smile from the massive Pakistani, who can trace the origins of Qawwali through seven centuries of Muslim culture.

DAVID SLY - MUSIC CRITIC  
ADELAIDE FESTIVAL 1992

"I couldn't believe my ears when I first heard Nusrat several years ago and greater familiarity with his soaring, passionate, improvisatory singing has only increased my admiration. Qawwali - the devotional music of the Sufis - at least when performed by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Party (which includes other vocalists, tabla and harmonium) - is one of the greatest musical experiences available, whatever one's religious belief or lack thereof." (D.S.)

Doug Spencer



Virgin

FAX TO: AMANDA JONES/BUY HAYDEN

FROM: GILBERTO BARANTANI

DATE: 29TH MAY 1992

RE: NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN

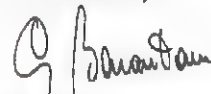
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YOU WILL BE GLAD TO HEAR THAT NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN HAS RECEIVED THE NOMINATION (AMONGST OTHER & POETS) FOR THE "NOSSIDE" INTERNATIONAL POETRY AWARDS 1992 WHICH TAKES PLACE IN ROME EVERY YEAR IN DECEMBER.

THE REASON WHY NUSRAT HAS RECEIVED THE NOMINATION IS BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN CONSIDERED A MUSICIAN WITH A TREMENDOUS SENSIBILITY WHO IS ABLE TO CONJUGATE THE TRADITION OF HIS OWN COUNTRY AND THE MUSICAL HARMONIC STRUCTURES OF ITS MUSIC WITH THE WESTERN WORLD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC.

OTHER NOMINATIONS WERE GIVEN TO THE FAMOUS POET RAFAEL ALBERTI FROM SPAIN, ITALIAN SONGWRITER FABRIZIO DE ANDRE', SARDINIA GROUP TAZENDA, FRENCH FILM MAKER MICHEL DEVILLE, ITALIAN POETS TONINO GUERRA AND ANDREA ZANZOTTO AND FEW OTHERS.

BEST REGARDS,

  
GILBERTO BARANTANI

La voce di Nusrat ha potenza e profondita tali da consentire, a chi vi si imbatte, di superare ogni barriera linguistica e culturale.

ENZO GENTILE  
MUSIC CRITIC-TIME ZONE

Nusrat's voice has such strength and depth, that anybody who runs into it can overcome any cultural or linguistic barrier.

ENZO GENTILE  
MUSIC CRITIC-TIME ZONE

We announce the Prologue and retire; after us better players will come !

Will Durant





A man called Qawwali

## **I, NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN**

I, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, son of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan a humble man, Allah's mendicant singing praises of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him), a slave at the door of Ali. Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali: these are the names that I repeat, because saying their names is my faith and following them as a slave is my life and identity.

With these names on lips I wander from one country to another, I sing in ecstasy, and it is my desire and wish, that in this wide, wide world wherever the wind goes I go in the name of Allah. That I may spread their name and their message. The message of one-ness, and peace.

I Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, am the son of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, who too was a fakir, a mendicant. All his life he sang the songs of Allah, of truth, with the flute of his heart,



his breath. He presented himself in all humbleness on the threshold of the Saints and on the mazars of men of God. For him the pinch of dust from the holy places was like gold. As he left us, he gave that gold to me that I keep in my heart as something asacred to heart that I see with reverence.

I am a man without, without knowledge.

Yet I am blessed with God's mercy and benevolen.

God who gives food to ants in the stones. I am blessed by the one who is beloved of Allah, the Holy Prophet, (Peace be upon him) and I am blessed by Ali who was given the title of the Lion of God. I am blessed with the good wishes of men of God, the Saints, on whose mazars millions say their salaam and get solace and peace of mind. They are my guardians. Otherwise I am a person, a humble creature, a handful of dust, and nothing more.

I, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, am a sinner. A man with a heart impure and dark. It is like a mantle that is dotted with spots of stains and dirt. A recital of Allah's name purifies the heart. That is what I do all the time, recite the word. This is my job, my task, my favourite hobby. I am a mendicant of Allah, and wander the streets, shouting His name. Remember your God, in pain, in pleasure. He will wash away the pain. People remember God only when they are in adversity. If they remember Him in good times they will never have pain and will never experience adversity.

The faith is the message of peace, a light in darkness,

a balm for the wounded, a death for pain.

I am a pedlar, wandering and roaming from one village to another, in the lanes of cities, in the countries of the world, offering the message of peace, wishing to continue to do so all my life. And after a lifelong wandering when I reach my destination, may the slavery of Allah, His Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali be the tiara on my head, shining like a star!

I Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, have learnt music as part of my prayers and worship. In my surs the sacred names of Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace by upon him) and Ali blend like fragrance and make the surs more melodic and render my life immortal. This music is like a spiritual orchestra. As the tunes spread into the wide, wide spaces the listeners bow their heads in reverence. All this is because the recital of the name of Allah.

I, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, am a courier,

sending out missives with the name and message

of Allah, on wings of surs.

I decorate the space with images of peace

painted on the wings of voice.

I am blessed by Allah who gives me so much, more than I deserve. I am a beggar whose bowl overflows with honour and popularity and fame, whose eyes are clouded with tears of gratitude.

How I wish, that I, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan may continue to deliver missives of peace to the willing hearts, paint the pictures of peace on wings, and may Allah bless my work, and may my eyes be always moist with tears of gratitude!

ANCESTORS

To be ignorant of lives of the most celebrated  
men of antiquity is to continue in a state of  
childhood all our days

PULTARCH



Ustad Fateh Ali Khan



### **Nusrat - The Family Tree**

The ancestors of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan came to India from Afghanistan during the last year of the 12th century A.D., following the foot steps of their Murshid, spiritual Guide Hazrat Shiekh. The Sheikh chose the stay at a small village near Jalandhar. Later the place came to be known as Basti Shiekh. Such emigration is in keeping with the practice of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him), and to bring the unbelievers to the path of Islam. The land of the Indian Sub-continent has been blessed with such Sufis as Hazrat Data Gunj Baksh, Moin-ud-din Chisti, Shams Tabraz Sabzwari, Hazrat Bukhtiar Kaki, Hazrat Baba Farid, Hazrat Nizam- ud-din Aulia, Hazrat Mian Mir. Their names shine like stars; their mission was to spread light and remove the darkness of unbelief and kindle the fire of faith in the

temples. Such was the mission of Hazrat Sheikh and the ancestors of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan served the mission with their own bit of singing of mystic poetry or rather the sufic poetry. As music enjoyed great importance in Hindu culture, the Muslim men of God chose Qawwali for their work. The purpose was to attract people of India to the Muslim faith through Qawwali, so that as they listened to the musical composition based in the local ragas, they would also absorb the message of Islam couched in attractive language and composed in charming new mode of music, the Qawwali. In India, Qawwali became the integral part of the preaching of Islam. Its significance, in this regard, can never be over-estimated.

In this way the poetry, the teachings and sufic message of Hazrat Sheikh was communicated to the people through the ancestors of Nusrat. The impact was such that thousands of people were converted to Islam. They chanted the kalima to affirm their faith. The arid land of unbelief had blossomed with greenery. The region around Jalandhar now echoed with the singing of the followers of the Sheikh along with his teachings.

After the death of Hazrat Sheikh, the ancestors of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan took over the task of looking after the mazar-the tomb- of the holy man and held the qawwali sessions regularly there. With the qawwali, the musical composition as well as the sufic poetry prospered. The family

of qawwali singers became known for its artistic singing and produced master singers whose names are still known and regarded with respect:

The forefathers of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan had emigrated from Afghanistan and came to India. The line, for four generations runs like this:

- 1..Haji Maaruf
2. Muhammad Sharif
3. Amanat Khan
4. Saadat Dad

Saadat Dad had two sons:

1. Sahib Dad
2. Khaliq Dad

At this point, Fateh Ali Khan's family tree is linked with the progeny of Khaliq Dad:

- 1.Khaliq Dad
- 2..Jehangir Khan
- 3.Miran Bakhsh
- 4.Maula Bakhsh

Maula Bakhsh had four sons : Fateh Ali Khan, Mubarak Ali Khan, Nawazish Ali Khan and Salamat Ali Khan.

If qawwali can be termed as a boquet, they were the

four flowers, each with a different hue and fragrance. Alongwith Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, and Mubarak Ali Khan, was Salamat Ali, a great exponent of harmonium. In whole of the subcontinent he was recognised as an unequalled master of the instrument. Salamat Ali Khan played his harmonium as an accompaniment to such singers as Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Ustad Tawwakul Hussain, Ustad Chhotey Ghulam Ali Khan, Ustad Slamat Ali Khan Nazakat Ali Khan. He earned the appreciation of all these great masters of classical singer, but there is a story behind it.

In the days gone by, there was a great lady singer Ilahi Jan. She was fully knowledgeable in the intricacies of musical rendering of classical ragas. For the instrumentalists, it was a challenge to accompany her in her singing. Particularly the sarangi-players would be shy of accompaniment in her singing. The rule is that whatever the singer renders with his or her voice, the instrumentalist has to repeat it on his instrument. Her singing was thus a challenge for the accompanist sarangi player.

Once she was a guest of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and in the evening as she prepared to give an exposition of her artistic skill, Salamat Ali Khan came forward.

"Who is he?" she asked. "He is our brother Salamat Ali Khan", replied Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, "son of Maula Bakhsh", he added.

On this she started singing and soon it became

apparent that Salamat Ali Khan could not go along with her and in consternation, stopped playing his harmonium.

At this, Ilahi Jan laughed and said, "He does not seem to be the son of Maula Bakhsh."

Everyone was stunned. Salamat Ali Khan was feeling rather ashamed of himself. He was humiliated in the presence of a large company. Then Mubarak Ali Khan spoke: "He is son of Maula Bakhsh and Ilahi Jan! In a time of six months he will attain such skill that even you will not be able sing with his harmonium."

"Do you have a wand for turning him into a master?" Ilahi Jan said this, placing a pan in her mouth.

"Yes" replied Mubarak Ali Khan, "the magic wand of hard work and riaz," He used the word 'riaz' commonly employed by musicians for special and continuous practice of music and singing.

After that, Salamat Ali Khan worked on his harmonium with such relentless and devotion that his fingers became part of the 3-scale keyboard. When his fingers would tire he would dip them in cold water and start again. For six months, it was an inexorable grind.

On her next visit when the great singer Ilahi Jan arrived, Salamat Ali Khan was prepared and keen to take her on. As she started singing the harmonium played by Salamat Ali Khan seemed to forestall her rendition. His fingers moved



like lightning on the keyboard. Ilahi Jan was amazed at this complete transformation of a novice into a master and stopped singing

She said, "You are really the son of Maula Baksh." As Salamat in all respect, acknowledge the appreciation, Ilahi Jan kissed his hands.

Nawazish Ali Khan was the fourth son of Maula Baksh. He was an unworldly soul, interested more in poetry and other disciplines of knowledge and linguistics. He studied upto B.A and was not at all inclined towards singing or qawwali. Fateh Ali Khan loved him and tried to help him in establishing some business. He tried to entertain the whims of this poetic person and helped in all matters. Once Fateh Ali Khan gave Nawazish 90,000 rupees for starting some business. Nawazish was sitting on a cot woven with niwar - the cotton tape - and put the money inside the folds of the tape, and forgot about it. Six months later when the cotton tape was being re-woven around the wooden frame of the bed, the packet of money fell through the fold on the floor. Nawazish was not a practical man and had nothing to do with money and financial matters. He was a poet and wrote in the traditional classical mould. A few verses in memory of his brother Ustad Fateh Ali Khan might give an idea of the kind of poetry he wrote:

Fateh Ali Khan! you are a pride of art Indifferent to mortality, you are beyond all space and wordly

irrtations.

May God bless you and may you enjoy a life of blessed pleasure in paradise.

May you have the joy of seeing the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him)

And may your soul drink in the vision of God.

May you meet Nawazish on the Day of Judgement  
May our hearts bloom and rejoice in unison.

Of these four sons of Maula Baksh, the pair of Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan was extremely successful. Of the duo, Fateh Ali Khan was recognized as more popular and graceful personality. He was a man of many qualities and he introduced some revolutionary changes and innovations in the art of qawwali. There is a background to it.

Fateh Ali Khan had learned classical music and its training from his father Maula Bukhsh. But his voice was rather heavy and deep and he could describe the more subtle of the grace notes. This weakness or rather a shortcoming became the reason for a change in his style. For his individual singing he adopted the ancient style of Dhurpad. He would therefore repeat the range of the scale in counterpoint and say the refrain again in a blend of the raga with melody. He would take the verses which were very well-known and then add verses of similar meaning into them. This was another

innovation and became the hallmark of Fateh Ali Khan's style of singing. The qawwali fans became so enamoured of his style that the two brothers became the most famous and popular qawwals of the subcontinent. They demonstrated their skill and art in almost all the corners of the Indian subcontinent.

In 1935 Khawaja Hassan Nizami took notice of their style and gave his opinion in his weekly "Roznamcha":

Fateh Ali Khan is exponent of the art qawwali in India.

His innovative style has become so popular that even these days the singers, from the classical ones to the ordinary vocalists Fateh Ali Khan is taken as an authority.

"ROZNAMCHA"

Khawaja Hassan Nizami, 1935.

Fateh Ali Khan was an expert in the whole of range of eastern singing. He could sing all genres : Naat, Ghazals, thumri, Dadra, tarana, Khayal, light music and classical singing. He could sing to all kinds of audiences and claim their ovation and admiration. In the verses of Raaghib Muradabadi one can say:

When your voice came to my ears,

Was it a song or sheer magic!

The heart sang and the soul was in

ecstasy,

Oh! God! What voice, what grace

what beauty!

Shahid Ahmed Delhavi, a respected writer has praised the art of Fateh Ali Khan, and has admired his role in raising the status of the art of qawwali and making it a popular art. He said,"

Fateh Ali not only adopted a peculiar style but also enhanced the prestige of qawwali. Otherwise the qawwali was restricted to the mazars and shrines only, and the qawwals went from pillar to post in search of subsistence. Now in copying these two brothers many qawwal parties have adopted their style and have achieved success and fame.

"AHANG" June 1964  
Shahid Ahmad Delhavi.

Fateh Ali Khan had a tremendous memory. He knew verses in various languages such as Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Multani and other Indian dialects, by heart. Their audiences loved the way they blended the words into music, their peculiar style and their recitation. The rendition with an eye to the combination of meaning and music rendered the qawwali into a most effective musical art form. The rendering of raga with voice alone, without the help of words was another of their innovation in qawwali.

"The great poet Daag who used imagery and dialogue-form in his ghazal, Fateh Ali Khan did it in qawwali by the amalgam of music and poetry."

Saaz-e-Dil  
Akram Shami

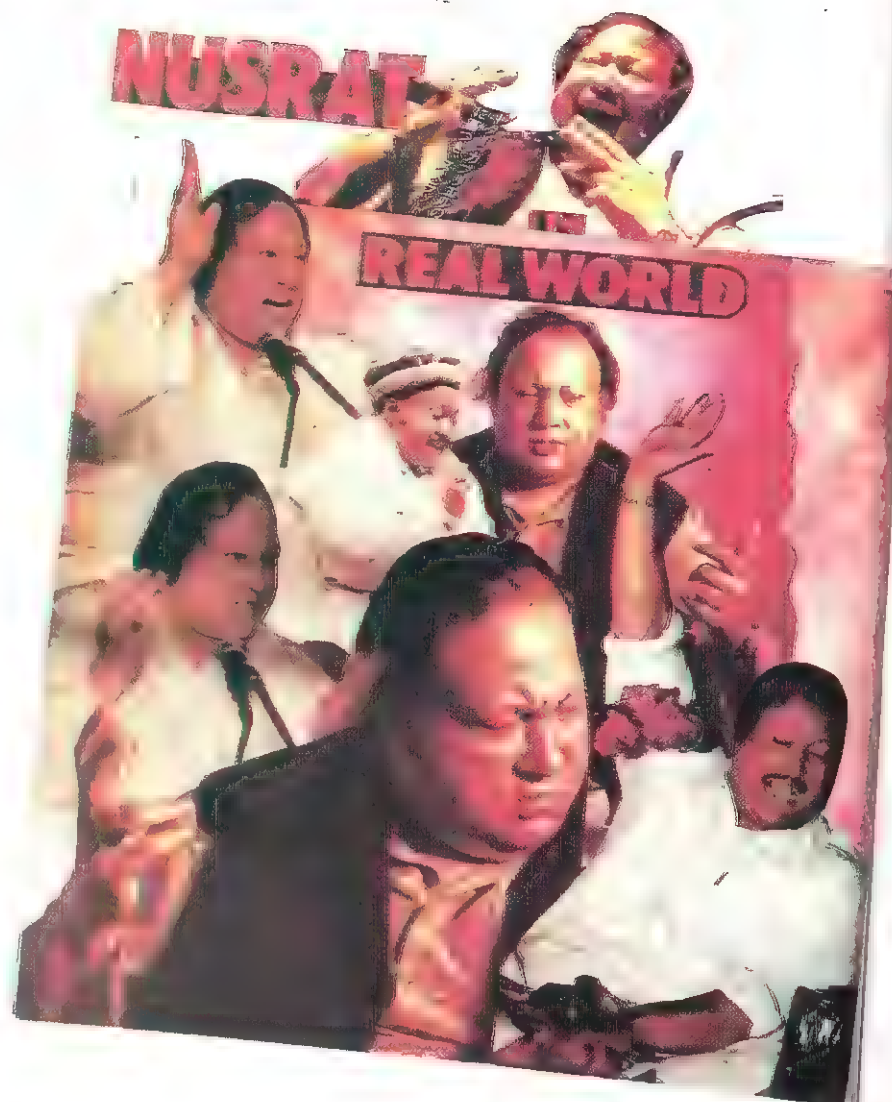
Another achievement of the Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan was the popularization of the poetry of Allama Iqbal in the whole of India. The great poet who was known only in the colleges and schools was now known all over the sub-continent. Not only that, it was the qawwali of Fateh Ali Khan that even the non-muslims became admirers of the great poet.

They had a way of singing the poetry of Allama Iqbal. They would begin with small poems or Ghazals of the poet and then extend the qawwali by adding other lines to it. The two great poems of Iqbal "Shikwa" -the plaint- and "Jawab-e-Shikwa", the answer to the plaint were sung by them with great penchant. People would say that though we read the poetry of Iqbal we understand it only when it is recited and rendered by Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan. Through Iqbal they brought qawwali to its pristine aim of preaching Islam. They created a love of Islam even among the most illiterate of Muslims. Allama Iqbal paid the ultimate homage to the two brothers by saying: I was restricted to schools and colleges only. You, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan have spread my poetry through India.



Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan





## PAIJI BHAJ JAN

A son was born to Ustad Fateh Ali Khan in 1948. The extraordinarily plump boy had small hands. He was named as "Pervez" and was known by his nick name " Paiji ". But one day the name became controversial.

All the friends and admirers around Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Ustad Mubarak Ali Khan were pious and good people. Among them were saintly people of great piety and character. Such a one was Pir Ghulam Ghaus Samadani, a great friend of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, once came to see him. As the guests and the host sat down after having their dinner, Nusrat entered the room and Fateh Ali Khan called : Come here Pervez !

At this Ghulam Ghaus Samadani gave a start and asked Ustad Fateh Ali Khan: What is the name of the boy ?

"Pervez", replied Fateh Ali Khan.

Ghulam Ghaus Samadani was rather peremptory, "Change his name, at once. Do you know who was Pervez. He was the king of Persia who tore us the letter sent to him by the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him)."

Everyone was silent on hearing this. Ghulam Ghaus Samadani spoke again, "This name does not augur well. It should not be the name of someone who will say the rosary of Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali."

"How should we name him then?"

"Nusrat", said Ghulam Ghaus Samadani, "Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan."

## NUSRAT

In his biography of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan "Hayat-e-Javed", Maulana Altaf Hussain Hali has said: The childhood of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not that of a great man. No one could say of him after seeing his behaviour that the child could be a great man. "Nusrat's childhood was not extraordinary by any means. He was a roly-poly boy that people saw going to the Pakistan Nursery School Faisalabad. A rotund child is an amusing sight but the household of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan was well appointed and furnished with every convenience and decoration. Nusrat had the company of three sisters and a brother Farrukh (who sings in his party)

and Fateh Ali Khan would say to his son : music is a forbidden fruit for you. Do not go near it. I do not want you to be a singer I want you to be a doctor.

Nusrat would listen to his father but would nurse the desire for the forbidden fruit, deep in his heart. He would play on his harmonium rather furtively because Fateh Ali Khan was rather an awesome person and everyone would be quiet when he came home. One day, however as young Nusrat was fiddling with the harmonium with complete concentration, he did not know that his father was standing behind him and listening to his tunes. When someone made a gesture behind him, Nusrat stood up rather nervously, the harmonium open before him. Fateh Ali Khan however smiled a little and allowed his son to play at the instrument occasionally but asked him to concentrate on his studies because he wanted the young man to be a doctor.

Even this kind of permission was a boon to Nusrat and in his spare moments he devoted himself to music and started practising with the instrument rather seriously. At this, Fateh Ali Khan would correct his son and give him hints in classical music. This proved to be a turning point and young Nusrat did his best to prove to his father that his inclination towards music was not that of a charlatan. He now attended to music with complete concentration.

Then something happened that decided the things for Nusrat. A well known classical singer of Calcutta Pandit Dina Nath came to visit Pakistan. He knew Fateh Ali Khan and when he came to Faisalabad, he stayed with the Ustad.

One day Fateh Ali Khan asked the Pandit how he

liked Pakistan.

" Useless, absolutely no good. I want to sing and cannot."

" Why, Pandit Ji ? "

" Why, there is no one here to accompany me on tabla !"

When I start singing, the tabla - players just give up. I

had come to Pakistan to demonstrate my art of singing but am going back without expressing myself."

The Pandit went to bed saying this and left Fateh Ali Khan in a rather pensive mood. The disparaging remarks by the Pandit had hurt him. Was there no one who could play on tabla with the Pandit? He knew that Nusrat did his daily practice on harmonium as well as on tabla and was sure that the young man could handle the percussion instrument with the singing of the Pandit. He called him to his side and told him about what Pandit Dina Nath had said about music in Pakistan. At this Nusrat said,

" I will give company to Pandit Ji if you permit me to do so."

Fateh Ali Khan was happy at this and gave a few hints to his son and asked to prepare himself for a session with the Pandit Ji to sing, the Pandit's reaction was typical, " Who will play at tabla ? " Fateh pointed towards Nusrat and



the Pandit laughed :

" This fat boy, Nusrat ? "

" Of course, he is fat in body but his brain is sharp."

The Pandit did not want to offend the host and started singing, with the belief that Nusrat, after all, was the son of master singer and might manage to do something. But soon he felt that he had let himself in deep trouble because Nusrat was playing on his tabla with lightning fingers as he thought that the occasion was a crucial test for his prowess in his chosen field of art. It was, for him, now or never. A failure this moment could never restore him the confidence that he wanted to create in his father's estimation.

The Pandit was dazzled with the electric playing of tabla by the fat boy and stopped singing. He looked wondering at Nusrat and embraced him, kissed him with love and admiration, and said to Fateh Ali Khan :

" I am defeated Fateh Ali Khan. Your son is talented."

This was the first success and great win for the musician and singer of the future.

The experience of playing at tabla with Pandit Dina Nath gave Nusrat the idea of learning the difficult instrument of Sarangi. He knew the hazards of the venture but success only comes to the daring and he had made up his mind. Fateh Ali Khan, the proud father had made up his mind. Fateh Ali Khan, the proud father had now realized the possibilities of

his son's potentials in mastering the art of melody and tunes. He knew that his son was the person to learn with the ruthlessness of vivisection. He would rather apply the balm of music to the wounded hearts of his listeners who suffered the pangs of separation from the loved ones. He thus buried his ambition of making his son a doctor and initiated him in the mysteries of music. Nusrat had passed matriculation examination and that was the end of his formal education. He closed those school books and started on the journey of discovery of new ragas and melodies, tunes and rhythms. Fateh Ali Khan placed before his son the treasures of an experience and knowledge of a lifetime. He introduced points of various musical compositions. But the process could not last for long. Death laid its cold hands on the warm-hearted great singer. The man who had awakened a whole nation to the message of freedom now went to sleep in his grave, leaving behind a grieving Nusrat shedding tears beside a quiet harmonium.

The death of Fateh Ali Khan was a great shock and loss to the whole family. His brother Mubarak Ali Khan was lonely and the art of qawwali was the identity of family. That sense of identity and a sense of wealth was being jeopardized because Fateh Ali Khan was his right hand. When the two brothers sang, they both provided the lead and Mubarak alone could hardly cope with the task and in this state of confusion he never thought of Nusrat though he would rather worry about the young man.

The other acolytes of Fateh Ali Khan were also not very hopeful about Nusrat. They thought that he would not be equal to the task. Some would object to his shrill voice, the others thought about his obesity and said that he could not support his own weight how he could carry on to the art of qawwali. They were pessimistic about the family to be able to carry on the traditions of qawwali and it was Mubarak Ali Khan who bore the brunt of such attacks and barbs of satire and worry.

The sarcastic reference to a shrill voice was also suffered by Sophocles the 4th century B.C. Greek dramatist. According to the Greek tradition of drama the playwright himself was supposed to play a role and was also to sing the choral songs. When Sophocles took his play to the incharge of drama academy he said on hearing his voice :

Your voice is like women and you can neither play the role nor sing a song. Your play therefore cannot be recommended for inclusion in the competition. This belonged to the early days. Later Sopocles obtained training in music from great musicians and achieved great fame in the art of drama. There is that remarkable similarity between sophocles and Nusrat whose voice was dubbed as shrill and unfit for music. Today things are different. The great music critic Micheal Brook says about his voice :

" In his voice I find a kind of direct communication that seldom fails to move me deeply." ( Time Zones )

Those who shot the verbal barb of obesity at him are perhaps not aware of the fact the greatness hardly comes from physique but from the mind that controls the body like the captain of a ship that drifts along the waves of sea. If obesity were an obstacle in the way of success and greatness then Oscar Wilde, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. Balzac and Barey Ghulam Ali Khan would have been unknown and ordinary people. If at a time the obesity of Nusrat were looked with suspicion, the Japanese would have considered it something sacred and rather legendary.

The dismal comments and remarks of Fateh Ali Khan's pupils and friends, about Nusrat, deeply affected Mubarak Ali Khan. He felt as if there was a conspiracy afoot against the whole family and its tradition. He felt the great wave of defeat and despair. Mubarak Ali Khan faced all this with conviction and determination. Standing among the mourners, he declared in a loud and clear voice :

" I will train Nusrat in music and the man whom you consider to be a small artiste will emerge as a great artiste of tomorrow."

On hearing this the people were dismayed and on the face of Nusrat spread the light of confidence and certainty.

The journey on path of learning music is easy going in the beginning, but as one advances, the steps become harder

to master, the destination appears to be near but like a mirage gets farther away as one wants to reach it. The distance seems to stretch. The novice like a swimmer in sea is sometimes beguiled by a small wave and is entrapped by the eddying waters. The world of classical music is like a small glass - house and in small deviation from the composition may cause a crack in the wall, and the whole room may come crumbling down.

"Breathe softly! The glass work of this universe is very subtle and delicate....."

The subtle and delicate filigree of melodies and tune needs perfection and control. The rules of the game here are very hard, and those who do not know the rules may rather not enter the field. For Nusrat music was not a game. He listened to it with his whole being; as if he was all ears. He absorbed the principles and the discipline of the music claimed all his concentration.

Fateh Ali Khan his father had prepared his son as a cultivator prepares the soil to receive the seed. The training by Mubarak Ali Khan worked like a gardener watering the newly grown plant. Music blossomed in Nusrat as the work of his father and his uncle took roots in him. Nusrat and his uncle Mubarak Ali Khan were keenly conscious of the family tradition and its prestige. The family had kept aloft a 600 years old tradition of Qawwali and now it was the target of calumny at the hands of rivals and ill-wishers of the family.

They wanted to triumph over the peoples cavilling and criticism. The one gave the other received.

But once again the death came between them and took away Mubarak Ali Khan. The death of his uncle and mentor was a great blow and setback to Nusrat. but he did not lose heart and stuck to a relentless regime of practising the art of music. Alone in his room he would experiment with different compositions. With him music was an obsession and a fate.

The art of qawwali had not been abandoned by the family or gharana, as it is called in the musical circle. In the absence of the two maestros, Fateh and Mubarak, who had died, their younger brother Salamat Ali Khan now led the party. Nusrat was a part of the group but his situation was that of a 12th man in a cricket team. Sometimes he would be asked to give solo performance as an opening program and was then sent to sleep in the van. He was not supposed to sing with others. In his lone hours he would think about the time when he would be taken as a regular and important member of the party.

The word Nusrat means help from the God and eventual success.

He was confident of his ultimate success. He extended his hours of practice and worked harder at it.

A similarity between him and a Greek dramatist



Sophocles has already been described. There is another incident that ran parallel between the two. Sophocles used to work in an orchard. One day, after his laborious work, he lay down under a tree and went to sleep. There he had a dream. He saw that a god approached him and exhorted him to write a play and even dictated some parts of it. As he woke up, Sophocles remembered every thing vividly and wrote down the play and then went on writing plays as his life long vocation.

Nusrat had a similar experience. As his brother Furrukh narrates it, Nusrat one day started to sing in his sleep and went on singing for about an hour. As he woke up he told the others that his father had asked him in his dream to sing on a mazar. The elder ones in the family were moved on hearing this and were convinced that he could be a part of the qawwali party. When Nusrat described the mazar he had seen in his dream some of the listeners were not surprised. Five years later when Nusrat went to Ajmer Sharif (India) he recognized the famed mausoleum, to his great astonishment.

The vision of that mausoleum in Ajmer Sharif in a dream, and his singing there, on asking of his father, proved to be a great good omen. Those who heard of it believed that Nusrat could sing and that he possessed the stamina and strength to stand the rigors of qawwali to the very end of the performance. He was then admitted to the party as a regular member and then came the moment for which he was waiting.

In the days gone by, Radio Pakistan held a musical festival, on 23rd of March every year and the occasion was known as Jashn-e-Baharan the spring festival. Reputed singers of classical music were invited to it. It was 23rd of March 1965 that Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan came with his party to participate in the Festival. Those who attended the rehearsals were stunned to hear a voice that sounded different. It reflected an individual talent soaked in the practice of long hours of musical compositions. It was a voice trained and modulated, small yet powerful and that called everyone's attention to itself.

Shakoor Baidil, was the producer incharge of the Festival and was listening to the rehearsals. As he heard the new voice, he raised his hand and stopped the rehearsal of the qawwali party from Faisalabad, with Nusrat in it. He suggested to Salamat Ali Khan, the uncle of Nusrat.

"Khan Sahib why don't you let this boy lead the qawwali?"

Salamat had his reservations and others too hesitated a little but then put the boy in the lead on the insistence of Shakoor Baidil.

The boy stood up and took his place right in front and raised his voice with confidence in his hard work and practice.

Everyone was thrilled. Members of his own party smiled broadly at the effect created by the boy's mastery



over the art. There were other great and prominent singers sitting around in the studios who took notice of the new voice and congratulated the young artiste on his performance. Among them were Roshan Ara Begam, Ustad Salamat Ali, Nazakat Ali Khan, Amir Ali Khan, Ustad Sardar Khan and others.

All of them realized that a star was born. Later, listeners on the radio were introduced to a new voice that could render the subtleties of musical compositions with complete mastery. They knew that a new artiste had joined the ranks of good and great singers, and that too at a comparatively younger age.

In heavens, perhaps the father and uncle of Nusrat, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan must have rejoiced at the prospect of the rejuvenation of the 600-year old tradition of qawwali, in the family. On that day, 23rd of March, 1965, the spring Festival introduced a new artist to the country. His name was Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

## NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN

Two hundred years back, Frederick, the uncle of Louis XIV, was talking to the people and receiving them for a large banquet in the palace. There, on the other end of the Hall, Voltaire was talking rather loudly and Frederick asked about him. Voltaire replied from that distance :

Sir, I am a person who did not achieve greatness merely through heredity, I achieved it with my own hands.

He was right. He lived among enemies. His father was against him, even the King was his enemy and the people of France did not like him. But he stood his ground and fought his battle with great intelligence and vigour till everyone recognized him and admitted his greatness. He believed that one could inherit money, property and land but fame and greatness come only after struggling for it.

Greatness is not the flower on a bough that one could just pluck and put it in the button-hole. Only those who burn the midnight oil, and offer their blood on the altar of the goddess of fame and greatness, can achieve these.

Though Nusrat had the advantage of being the son of Fateh Ali Khan, he worked hard for fame. He suffered a lot, went on the rough, bumpy paths, suffered the barbs of satire and taunts of the ones who use burning words to express their venomous thoughts. But he did not beg for anything. It was only through great suffering that he convinced people of his greatness. He exhibited his skill and art in the open bazaar of the people's taste. It was the people who liked his work, bought it and his name spread far and wide.

When Nusrat started singing, it was the period of Ghulam Farid Sabri's rise and climax of popularity. Their Qawwali "Tajdar-e-Haram " was popular with everyone. It was a time of challenge for Nusrat. He had to win against that popularity but he never thought of negative tactics. He wanted to bring his own skill and art to prove himself, like a flower in a garden known for his individual talent.

In 1958 as General Ayub Khan took over as the Chief Martial Law Administrator, many reforms were introduced in various fields of life. One was to establish the department of Auqaf-The trusts. This department took over the control of all the famous and great mazars-the tombs of the great Sufis. The income of these mazars was now controlled by the

government. The boxes where the votive offerings of money were made were locked and the old keepers and mujawars lost their hold on the money and they were not happy with the new reforms and were prone to be angry with the government. One such mazar was one at Pakpattan, of Baba Farid Shakar Gunj. When the government wanted to take it under its control, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, the father of Nusrat was in favour of the measure and this angered the Mutawwali, the keeper of the mazar, Dewan Sahib. Fateh Ali Khan who sang on the mazar was not invited after that and he did not go there to perform his qawwali. After the death of Fateh Ali Khan. when Nusrat's voice made its impact, the Divan Sahib invited young Nusrat to the mazar.

Singing of qawwali at the mazar is an economic as well as a votive activity on the annual occasion in the memory of Muslim saints and sufis. Pakpattan is an important mazar and every year qawwals from various areas and region converge on the mazar to present their art as a regular ritual. In those days Ghulam Farid Sabris were the general favorites. Every year they would steal the show and other qawwal parties were rather shy of them.

The reason was that once the Sabris would finish their number and leave the audience would also leave the pindaal - the place of gathering'

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan knew this. Things happened as expected. Ghulam Farid Sabri and his party arrived with full

regalia and rendered their qawwali with great professional elan, received everyone's admiration and left in style, in complete triumph. Many of the listeners scattered here and there and sought a place for rest and sleep. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan had to sing after the Sabris and when he started to sing, with his party, there were very few listeners but that lasted only for a few minutes. Nusrat's voice soon made everyone look askance, rather in wonderment towards the qawwals.

Those who were preparing for rest and sleep were roused and soon the "Pindaal" the place meant for the audience, was filled by the pilgrims to the mazar. They felt under the spell of this new singer.

From that day onwards the graph of Nusrat Fateh Ali's fame rose sharply and he left his contemporaries miles behind.

The Amir Khusrau Festival, on 700th Anniversary of the great genius of 12th century, organized by Pakistan National Council of Art was a memorable occasion. Held in 1975, the conference invited great writers, thinkers and men of letters to pay tribute and homage to the great man who had contributed so much to the music of the sub-continent. Since he is credited with the invention of the Qawwali, it was only proper that all the qawwal parties be invited to perform on this occasion. At that time Manzoor Niazi, Bahauddin and Ghulam Farid Sabri were the leading qawwals. Nusrat Fateh

Ali Khan got invitation but a little late. When he reached Islamabad, with his party, all the other parties had reached the capital two or even three days before them. Since the whole festival was in the name of Amir Khusrau, it was imperative that all qawwal parties should perform and render the poetry of Amir Khusrau. The other qawwals who had arrived earlier had already appropriated their items to be performed. When Nusrat would name an item the answer would be that that would be sung by Manzoor Niazi or by Ghulam Farid Sabri. The result was that all the well known and popular items had been allocated to the other qawwals. This put him in a quandary. He belonged to a family with long tradition of qawwali behind it. The family claimed a vast repertoire of verses to be sung at various occasions. As he reviewed the great heritage he chose a rare and less-performed item and one that belonged to Amir Khusrau.

it read like this:

Mein to pia sey nainan mila aayi rey

Par nari ganwari kahey so kahey

Mien to pia sey nainan mila aayi rey

In rough translation it would read like this: I have met my beloved, Whatever the ignorant girl of my village might say, I am happy, I have met my beloved.

According to Sajjad Haider Malik, then a director of publicity for the council and a compere of the Qawwali

program, this was something new for the audience. This was followed by "sazz giri". a raga rarely performed by our artistes. The audience was enthralled Nusrat then sang in his characteristic manner the "Haq Ali Ali" qawwali creating a spiritual aura in the auditorium. Everyone in the audience felt as if under a spell. Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Muhammad Ali the film star, Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, Khalid Said Butt the Director General of the council, Secretary information, the minister of state all came on the stage and joined the great qawwal, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in providing the rhythm with their clapping. The audience in the hall joined them. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, with his masterly rendition of Amir Khusrau's poetry had won them all.

Then Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan performed a more difficult style of qawwali, the Qaul Qalbana, another composition of Amir Khusrau, and caused a sensation. Divided into five taals, Qaul Qalbana is very difficult composition to master and only the traditional Qawwals attempt it. With this performance Nusrat had served notice on all that he was on his to his destination, the first step of which was his performance on the chehlum of his father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan.

About some people it is said, rather proverbially that they travel the hard way towards success. For Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan this was the only way available. There was a time, when with their arms open in a gesture of embrace, despair and despondency stood in the rugged path, where Nusrat's

feet were bruised and at times he was reduced to tears. Once it happened to him rather literally.

He had received an invitation from a village across Mangla lake. The journey was risky. In the first stage they had to cross the lake on a launch, Then there was the long, rugged, stony path for miles. As the members of the qawwali party sat in the launch and saw water all around them they forgot all about ragas and singing. In the middle of the lake the boat ran out of gas. They reached across with great difficulty. Nusrat was very young at that time and had got scared. It was a testing time and the going now really got tough. Walking over stony path he fell several times and stumbled a lot and at last sat down and starting crying.

His uncle Salamat Ali Khan put a hand on his shoulder and said," Perhaps this is the only area that has not been conquered by our ancestors and our family."

A senior member of the ensemble, Abdul Sattar would not let such a remark go without a retort. It was too good an opportunity to pass up. He said, "Subhan-allah! You conquered all the green plains. and left this rough, hilly area for young Nusrat. You waited for him to be born and come here. Why did you not come here before ?"

Everyone laughed. The banter worked and Nusrat, encouraged by his uncle stood and started walking.

That was a rugged beginning, no doubt, and today



he has conquered the whole world. The only places he has not been to are Russia, China and Israel.

## USTAD NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's gaiki - the style of singing - embraces all genres of the eastern music. No doubt he is known as a great and famous qawwal and his career began as a qawwal and it was as a qawwali that he earned his early fame in the European countries. But he has a complete mastery on singing the thumri, khayal, geet, ghazal and the classical ragas. According to Sadiq Ali Mondo - a great master singer - a good singer should possess three things: lai (melody), voice and a brain to master and understand the intricacies of music. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan has them all in amazing abundance.

The training of classical music is a heritage of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He knew the ragas when he was very young. He could distinguish between the ragas at a tender age. His

grandfather Maula Bakhsh handed over , his skill and knowledge to Fateh Ali Khan and then Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan transmitted it to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan who enriched the heritage with his own grasp and hard work.

Recently in an interview to Enzo Gentile, an Australian correspondence Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan said that he could not stand the idea of bringing in any change to the classical music.

He said: "I cherish the tradition of classical music more than my life. I consider its protection and preservation as my spiritual duty. As an experiment I do not mind the use of western musical instruments. But it will be great injustice to introduce any change in the classical music. I use western musical instruments because I believe that you can dress up a pretty child in any clothes it will still be pretty. But the more important thing is that the child should not get injured while putting on those clothes.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is an expert in singing the ragas. On the occasion of 'chaliswan- the 40th day after death - of his father, when he sang and rendered a raga, many of the people who wished the qawwali to depart from the family, were sorely disappointed.

The famous British composer Peter Gabriel was impressed only because of Nusrat's mastery over classical music. He was in search for a singer who could express the agony of Christ in screams and apparently atonal voice, and

yet all those shouts and screams and atonal voices should be strictly within the rules of music. He searched wide and long but found no one who could fulfil all these conditions. At last it was Nusrat Fateh Ali, with his classical singing, who could grasp the whole thing and perform the apparently almost impossible task. Nusrat's expression of Christ's passion through a manipulation of the Raga Darbari is an example of his great skill and control in classical music.

All the great classical singers of the subcontinent acknowledge these qualities of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Ustad Salmat Ali Khan has said Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan knows the classical music thoroughly and has knowledge at his back and has the skill to express his knowledge through his voice. He has earned great fame with his experiments at an intellectual as well as practical level. He has also raised the prestige of the eastern classical music in the world.

He admires some western and European singers such as Bruce Springsteen. "He has an individual style and is extremely popular among the listeners. Al Farkatour of Mali is great folk singer. His compositions are very popular among the people. He wants to popularise his style of music and is doing it through an academy. I like his style very much..."

Peter Gabriel, the Creator of REAL WORLD has played a significant role in Nusrat's career. Peter Gabriel is a real campaigner in his search for new singers, the whole world over, for his recordings under the banner of Real World. He is a world-wide searcher of voices. When he was composing

the music track for director Martin Scorsese. "The Last Temptation of Christ", he was searching for a voice that could express the agony and passion of Christ. He had met many singers but was not satisfied with any of their voices. But as he listened to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan he could be imagined crying Eureka; like the Greek philosopher-scientist Archimedes. Nusrat's voice was put on the sound track.

The requirement of composer Peter Gabriel was two fold; that the voice should express the spiritual agony of Christ in a scream, and that the expression strictly adhere to the rules of musical composition. Nusrat set out to face the task with a clear-headed concept and great fund of his knowledge of his native classical music and with his unique grounding and practice in it. He worked his way through a manipulating of Raag Darbari with its taans and sargam, that Peter Gabriel had to say this about him: Whatever the music, whatever the technology, great records come from great performances.

After "The Last Temptation of Christ", Peter Gabriel presented Nusrat in Real World and issued cassettes and compact discs, for an unprecedented popularity of Nusrat. He was everywhere, with his voice. For his fans abroad, he says:

People there do not know me because of language. They do not know it. They loved me because of melody and tune. Here I communicate

with them through the languages we know. But the listener in the west reaches me crossing all barriers. In my performance and rendition, I improvise. For the people of Pakistan I spread out the lines, with an increase in language and theme and poetry. For my listeners abroad I decrease the poetic content and put more of the sargam, counter point, taans and other elements of classical music. I had never met Peter Gabriel before this. But as I met him I found him to be extremely intelligent and perceptive. He works with complete devotion and he works very hard. He knows how to appreciate the art and the artiste. The way he works for Real World is really something extraordinary. No one else can do it. I have learnt a lot from him, while I worked with him during the recording sessions.

In the voice of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, more than ten LPs, and the many CDs and more than a hundred cassettes have been issued. He says, "If I go on issuing cassettes and records in a similar manner, without introducing new variations, my listeners will be bored. A song cannot be heard for long. "Must, must" and many other songs have been composed with this consideration. Although the orchestra is western, the melody is my own, native, classical and oriental.

I will go on doing experiments in music but will not

even think of changing the classical content. The Eastern classical music is my soul. I will not disgrace it with any distortion".

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan wants to do much for classical music in Pakistan. He has plans for establishing a Music Academy, for imparting the knowledge and study of music to the youth. "People want to sing but they cannot make an advance without regular training. they usually stop after taking a few tentative steps. The Music Academy will help such learners and aspirants to learn music on regular basis and proper training.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan believes that so much needs to be done for children. For them nothing has been done. Music can be used for the study of other branches of knowledge. If education were given through music many of our education problems could be tackled. So many of moral, religious and historical lessons can be taught through music. I have learnt a lot from my tours abroad about music for children. I want to make a series of cassettes for them. It will be a musical serial to help children increase their potential. Like the Greek philosopher Plato, Nusrat considers music to be the prime element of good personality.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is at home in the theory and practice of classical music. He is fully acquainted with all the aspects of the art. He can write in notation the sargam of the raga and its forward and backward movement - aarohi and avrohi -

, as well. The practical demonstration comes through actual singing and that he has been doing since his tender age, and has proved that his range is wider than many other exponents of the art.

In an annual Urs of Pak Pattan he sang a raga. Among the listeners were knowledgeable persons and masters like Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, and Mehdi Hassan. They started an argument as to the name of the raga rendered by Nusrat, and could not agree over it. Next day they met Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and asked him about it. Nusrat replied that he had rendered the raga named by Mehdi Hassan.

During his tour of India, in a mehfil, Nusrat started a qawwali based on a raga. The progress of the qawwali accorded with the various progressive stages of the raga and was finished in a classical climax. Naushad, the great musician and composer of film songs, embraced Nusrat and said that he had heard lots of qawwalis but Nusrat was the first-ever qawwal who claimed appreciation as a master of classical singing and could combine the two.

Everyone is appreciative of his "lai-kaari", the melody. In Alhamra Council, Farida Khanam paid Nusrat a compliment by saying,

"Khan Sahib, your lai-kaari is unparalleled."

Badaruzzaman, said on an occasion that after Ashiq



Ali and Tawwakal Hussain, the great masters, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the greatest lai-kaar of the sub-continent.

Lai-kaari has permeated Nusrat's whole being. He imbibed it in his childhood when Fateh Ali Khan put him on the way to attain great heights in the art of singing.

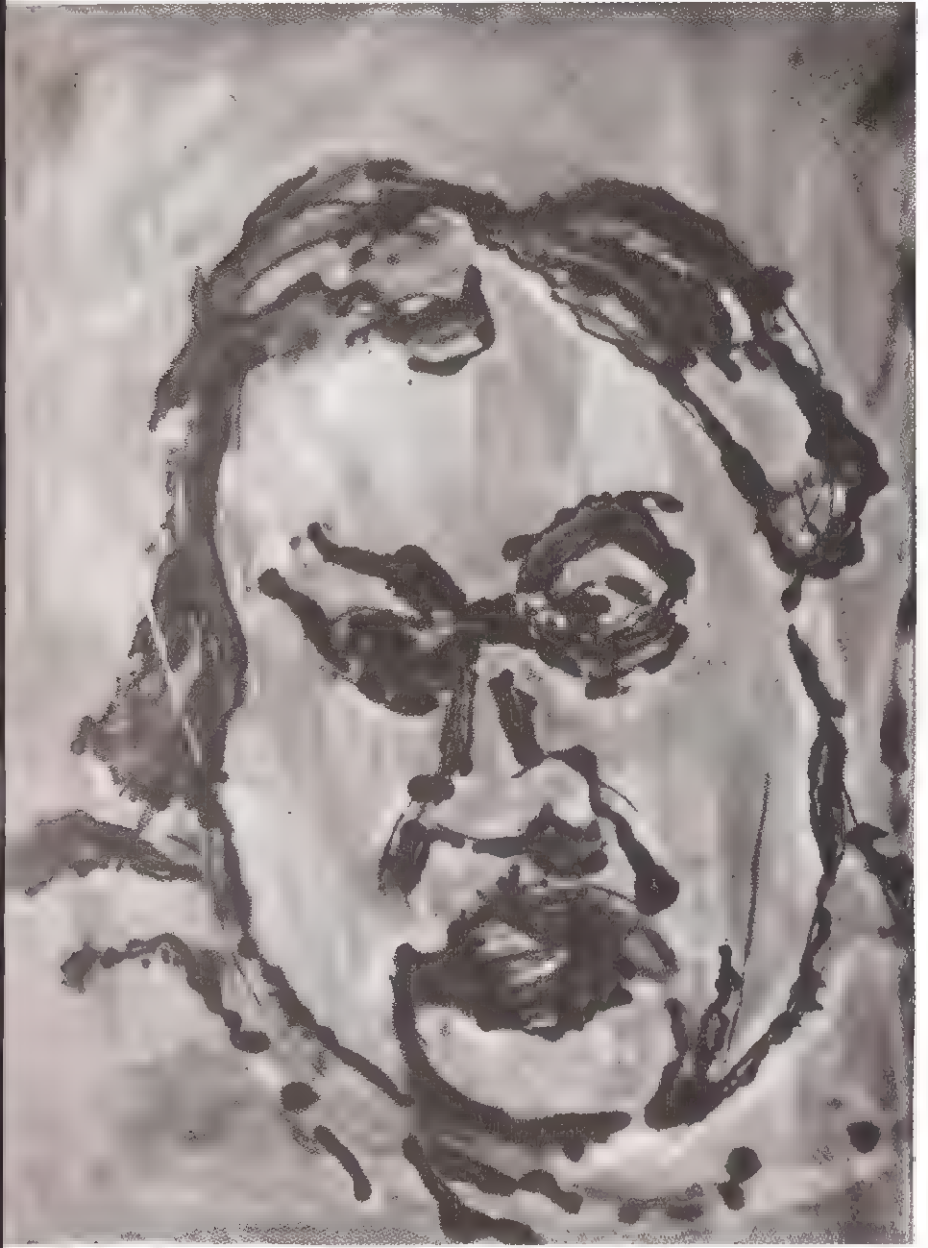
Ustad Fateh Ali Khan was right when he responded to Nusrat's mother protesting his playing of tabla by saying that those who master lai-kaari, always sit in front.

No doubt, Nusrat is right in front, in all respects, in fame in popularity, intelligence and in his control of his art.

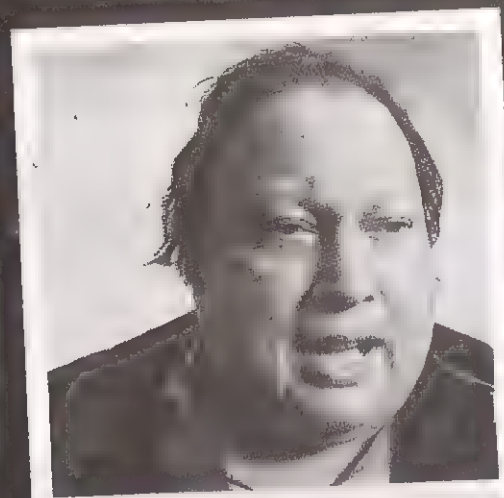
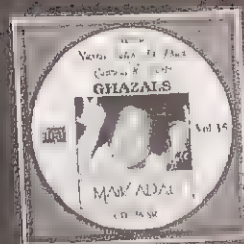
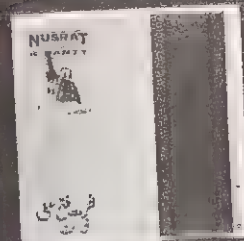
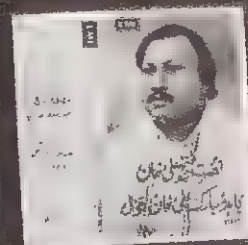
In the runaway bus of art and time Nusrat boarded with a jump through the back door and made his way, jostling through the throng of passengers and artistes, has taken the driver's seat. He is driving the bus with complete control and confidence. The passengers are contented that the bus travels the vale of melody and is never out of tunes. On the path the springs sing the ragas and the waterfalls repeat the sargam.

## DIALOGUE





A water colour by a Japanese Artist



SHAHANSHAH-E QAWWALI







Nusrat and party after receiving The Grand Prix

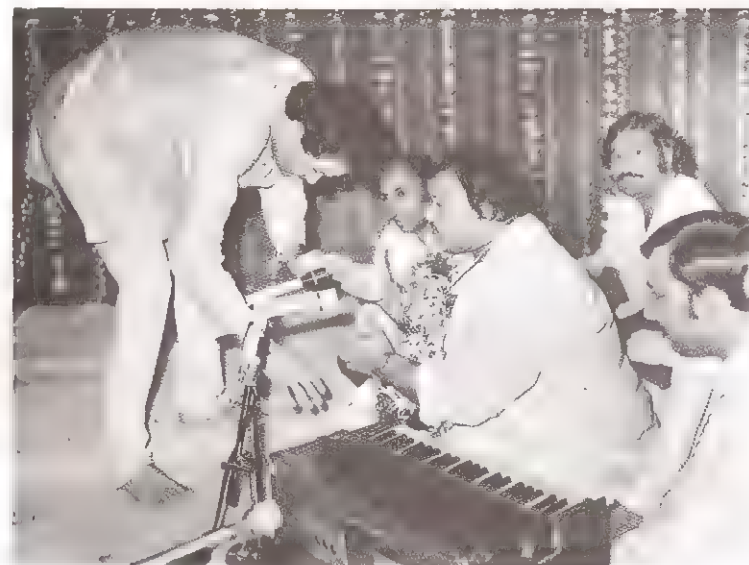


receiving Trobny n London Iqbal Naqbi and Mujahid can be seen

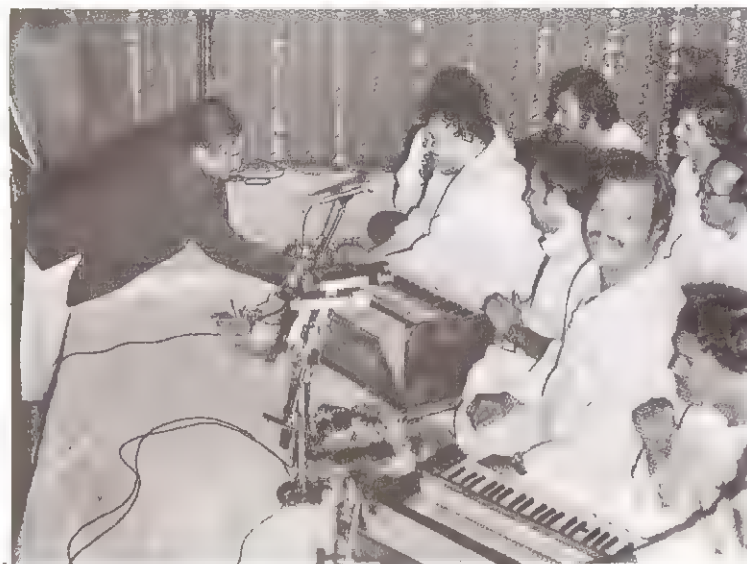
On wedding ceremony of Indian Film star Rishi Kapoor



Raj Kapoor, Nusrat Farrukh, Mujahid and Iqbal Naqibi



Nusrat and Randheer Kapoor



Nusrat, Farrukh, Iqbal Naqibi Asad and Randheer Kapoor



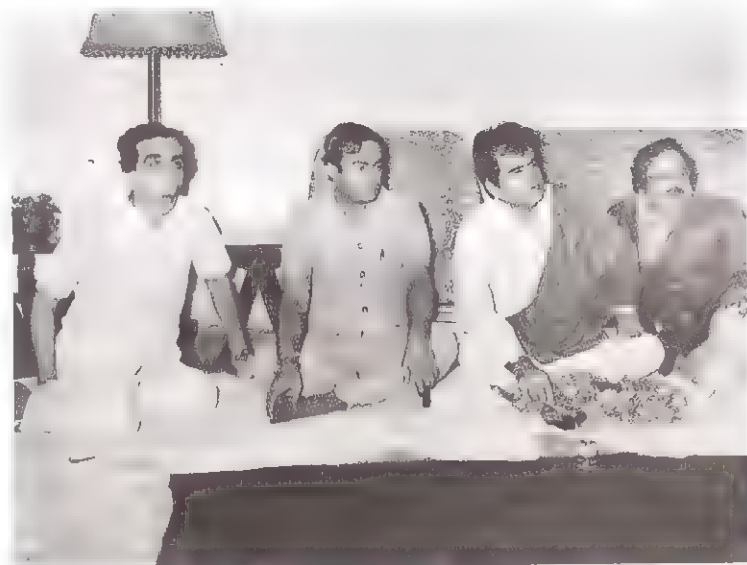
The Great Musician Naushad Ali, Raj Kapoor, Baharat Bhoshan,  
Rohial and Rishi Kapoor



Rishi and Nusrat



Nusrat and party with Raj Kapoor



Dilip Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar and others



Iqbal Naqibi with Shammi Kapoor





100 th Anniversary of Amir Khusrau



Muhammad Ali, Nusrat and Faiz Ahmad Faiz





A concert in Paris



Nusrat after receiving The Grand Prix



Nusrat and party after receiving The Grand Prix

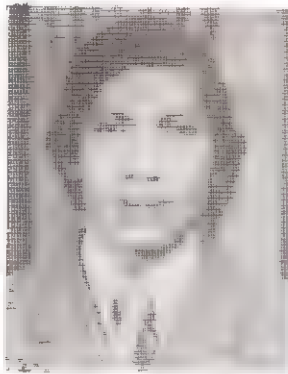


A concert in Paris

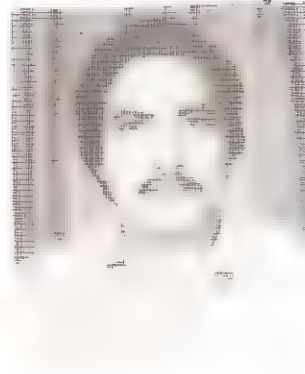
Party members of Nusrat



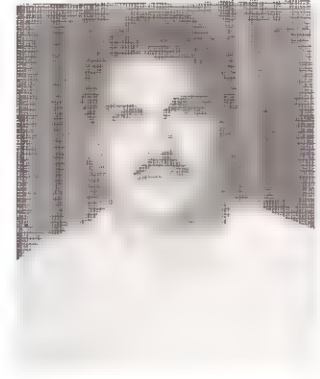
Kokab



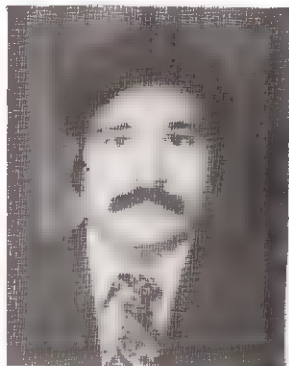
Dildar Hussian



Khalid Mehmood



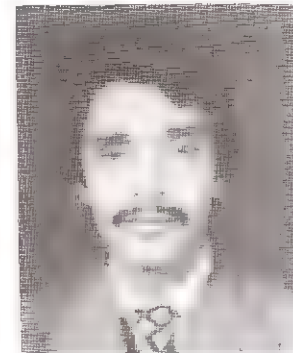
Rehmat Ali



Asad Ali



Ghulam Farid



Alayas Hussian



Before meeting Peter Gabriel I didn't know anything about him, but he seemed to be a very sensitive person, talented and always ready to give up time, always ready to give up time, and with a sort of respect for music. I think very highly of him for what he is doing with Real World and after listening to his records, I think I admire him even more. My meeting with him has led to important developments in my own music.

## A TREE OF MUSIC

The stairs, made with small, old-time bricks, and bound with iron frames were winding down from Farrukh's portion down to the courtyard. I, along with Rahat and Iqbal Qasuri, stepping down, cautiously, the much-used, smoothed-out and abraded old bricks, came downstairs, in the courtyard. There was a small heap of those small old bricks. The veranda was clean, everything in order, speck and span, with a larder, the fireplace and pots and pans. There in a wheelchair sat the diminutive, middle-aged lady. She was short, but graceful sober and a little sad. Rahat introduced her.

"She is our Rajay phuphi (father's sister)".

With her were two other ladies, on the charpoy was



the vivacious, smiling, fair-complexioned and elder Kaniz Fatima, and with her was the eldest Anees Jehan, very quiet and thoughtful. These are the three elder sisters of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

When Iqbal introduced me, Rajay Aapi responded with a nod but Kaniz Fatima, without looking towards me talked rather sharply to Iqbal Qasuri, as if a sister was making a hearty complaint to her brother. After she had made her point, she turned towards me, " He is our third brother. When he is late in coming to see us we talk to him like that."

Kaniz Fatima is a school teacher. All the sisters are cultured and have Afghani features common to the progeny of Fateh Ali Khan. They speak in an educated civilized manner, having adequate command on Urdu and English expression. Their conversation is fluent and affecting. Rajay Aapi is short, like Alexander Pope, perhaps 3 feet tall but she is mentally alert. In childhood, something like polio affected her growth but her skill in drawing and sketching with a common lead pencil has been extraordinary. Some of her work with pencil is astonishing in its precision and detail. Her sketch of her father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan is an undeniable proof of her great skill and control.

" Have you made a sketch of Nusrat?"

" No." She replied.

Why ? " My hands been affected by the disease and

now I cannot do the pencil work. The hands are unsteady but the eye is not", she said, " I have a sketch of Nusrat in my eyes that is a lot more beautiful than any pencil work."

Looking into her eyes, I said, "I can see that." She laughed and her eyes reflected the love of a mother and of a sister.

"Not one, but there are several sketches, in my eyes, as many as the names given to him by our father. Our father sometimes called him Lal Din, or Pitori Mal and sometimes a Pundit. When Nusrat tried to sing a little, our father would give him some money and say, "Pundit, take the money and stop singing. You cannot sing."

"You mean to say Ustad Fateh Ali Khan had serious doubts whether Nusrat could ever sing," I said.

Here Kaniz Fatima broke in, "No. Our daddy wanted him to study medicine and become a doctor. He tried to keep Nusrat away from singing. But music had fascinated Nusrat, it had taken roots in him and waited to grow. When father saw that it was impossible to bring Nusrat to study medicine, he gave serious attention to Nusrat's singing. But death did not allow him time for a complete training. Our father used to say to mummy, I have taught him four ragas. Even with these he can rule the world."

"Did you believe that it could be like that ?" I asked.

"Of course, we did. But the people around were

rather sceptic and spread a lot of despondency. They would say that qawwali had deserted the family of Fateh Ali Khan. Nusrat is not up to it."

Rajay Aapi said, "Nusrat was rather shy in his childhood. A little cowardly and different, and would ask all the four sisters to have their charpoys (bed) around him at night. In his sleep his hands and feet would move to rhythm and lai. On waking up we would ask him about it but he would not know a thing about it."

In a pensive manner, Kaniz Fatima said, "From what I remember of father talking about Nusrat, he was sure Nusrat will be a great singer. When our father was ill, he would go in a state of coma and would say, "give the world a new voice". Now when I remember that I realize the significance of his words. His prayers have been answered and by the grace of God, his wish has been granted.

Rajay Aapi reminisced. "Daddy used to say, as joke, "Lal Din, you cannot sing. Farrukh can !" She continued, "Nusrat was born after four sisters. He was therefore a favourite of us all, the center of attention and affection. Our father was so happy on his birth. A jashan, a festival was held on the occasion.

I asked Fatima, "I have heard that the Barey Ghulam Ali Khan had great respect for Fateh Ali Khan."

"Yes", she replied, "He had great respect for our father and there were reasons for that. Once, we were told,

that Barey Ghulam Ali Khan rendered the raga Ghumawati on radio for which he was honoured with a Jaimala - the garland of victory. It was something new for those who knew the art of singing and they asked the Khan Sahib about it. He told them that he had learned the raga from his brother Fateh Ali Khan. Such was the relationship and mutual respect between the two."

"Is there a similarity between Nusrat and his father ?" I asked.

Kaniz Fatima understood the implication, because physically Nusrat is not at all like his father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. She laughed and said, "You know Nusrat is the combination of father and his grandfather ( nana, the father of one's mother ). Our nana was roly-poly like Nusrat. Our late sister Bilqis was just like Nusrat, resembling him physically. She would be instantly recognized as Nusrat's sister. Once we were in Anarkali (Lahore) for some shopping and Nusrat's qawwali "Mein jannan jogi dey naal" (I will go along with jogi) was popular and the cassette of the qawwali was being played in a shop and the shopkeeper, looking out said " Look! there is the sister of Nusrat."

"But", she continued, "I was talking about Nusrat. In his physique he has taken after our grandfather, the nana jan. But his understanding and perception of music, his lai-kaari and control have come from our father Fateh Ali Khan."

"It is because of the prayers of our Pir Diwan Sahib"

interposed Rajay Aapi.

Kaniz Fatima continued, "Once Munawwar Ali Khan, the son of Barey Ghulam Ali Khan came to Faisalabad and stayed as our guests. In the evening Nusrat played on Tabla in accompaniment with Munawwar Ali Khan Sahib so well that Khan Sahib was surprised. We were looking at the whole thing from our windows. Our father was so happy and came to the courtyard and he stood right there near the bricks".

I looked in that direction realizing for the moment how many times the feet of that great artiste must have trod those bricks. "From there our father addressed our mother. "Look, mother of Lal Din, how well did he play on the Tabla !" " I know ", said our mother, "I am the wife of Fateh Ali Khan and the daughter of Pir Dad Khan. But you should teach him something so that he sits in the front, rather than in the back with the tabla." "Do not worry, he who knows the lai, always sits in the front", my father said. After that onwards we had all the confidence in Nusrat."

Kaniz said. "No doubt, Nusrat is there, right in the front." I could see the joy and confidence and pride for her brother, in her tone. "And you are happy about it", I said.

"Yes, we are so happy about it", replied Kaniz, "You see it is not money alone that is important. A person has another status also, you may call it social status as well. Such a status has been given to us by Nusrat. Rajay Aapi has never married. We two are widows. It is Nusrat who has

provided us with a shelter and protection against any social influence and adversity."

"Tell me about Nusrat's childhood", I said. "He was fat and must have suffered from some complex."

"No", Rajay Aapi said with emphasis. "Not Nusrat.

He had no complex. He was fat but he was very witty and very naughty too. He would make such witty remarks that our father sometimes had a good laugh over it."

"Sometimes our father would say, come on Pundit give us a piece of your wit", said Kaniz Fatima.

"Rajay Aapi I was Nusrat fond of eating during his childhood ? You know he is still a gourmet and is fond of eating good food." I asked.

"Yes", he loved to eat in his childhood but he also liked to feed others", Rajay replied.

At this kaniz interposed, "At times he had to pass the night under duress by the shopkeeper !" "How was that ?" I asked.

Kaniz said, "Years back when someone started an eatery with what he called "Jehangir Mughal Pilau" (chicken rice) it became extremely popular. It still is. Nusrat was very young in those days and a few friends of his asked him to give them a treat with that murgh-pilau. They went there and had their fill. But when Nusrat put his hand in his pocket to

make the payment he found he was short of money. Perhaps the bill was for three rupees and he had only a rupee and a half with him. The shopkeeper was very angry at it and the boys tried to run away. While the others escaped, Nusrat could not, as he was too heavy to run. The shopkeeper caught him and asked to sit right there till was free to deal with him. Nusrat pleaded with him but the shopkeeper refused to listen to his plea and made him sit there. It was at 4 am that the shopkeeper took time to see Nusrat at leisure and with curiosity. He suddenly said, "Are you the son of Fateh Ali Khan ?"

"Haan Ji"

"Mubarak Ali Khan is your uncle ?"

"Ji" "Is Sabri your brother?"

"Haan Ji!"

"Why did you not tell me before ?"

It was only then that he was released and came home.

I addressed Kaniz, "People in the west, in Europe, look at his face, and they see an innocence, a spiritual being in Nusrat. A critic has said that Nusrat looks like Gautam Buddha. What do you think about it ?"

"Our father and mother both were dervishes, and Nusrat has received influences from both. When he was much younger he had a sort of gift of prophecy. He would

say something and that would prove to be right. For instance, it so happened often, that as I got ready to go to school, he would say it was no use going to school, as it was closed on that day. And it so happened as I went to school it was closed for one reason or another. It had rained or something else had happened. Such things happened frequently. But, seriously I believe that all this spiritually comes from his heart, his basic goodness. He has never smoked, never uttered a bad name for anyone. He has had no quarrel with anyone, ever. No backbiting. If Rajay sometimes gets angry with him, he comes to her to talk to her, to placate her and to appease her anger. He is never content unless her unhappiness is finished and the anger is gone."

"Why is she angry with him?" I asked.

Rajay offered to explain, "If the moon disappears behind the clouds the earthlings are agitated. When he fails to see us for a time, we get scared and worried. Otherwise there are just tiffs between brothers and sisters."

"People say it is Fateh Ali Khan speaking through Nusrat!" I said.

"They are right", Kaniz responded. "The tree of music that grew in Fateh Ali Khan is now taking roots in Nusrat."

"What is that?" I asked.

"Once when our father was very ill, he sent for our uncle Nawazish Ali. When our uncle came to him he asked to



get hold of a pencil and a piece of paper.

"Now make a trunk of a tree on the paper. "Uncle Nawazish did it. After that he asked to draw branches coming out of the tree trunk and then he asked him to draw leaves on those branches.

"How many leaves ?" My uncle asked.

"As many as you wish", replied my father. "Someone has drawn such a tree of music inside me. Should I give this tree to you ?" He said this while looking towards uncle Nawazish.

Our uncle was very happy at it. "I will be lucky if you give this tree to me !"

"All right! you take it". He gave that piece of paper to Nawazish Sahib."

Then a little later, he took back the paper saying, "You cannot cope with this task. It is rather a great responsibility. You cannot look after the tree."

"He tore the paper into small pieces."

Kaniz Fatima continued with her narration and said, "When I see the perfection and mastery of Nusrat's singing and his lai-kaari, I believe that tree is now growing inside Nusrat and is sprouting new branches and new leaves."

For a few moments, Kaniz Fatima was lost in thought, like a traveller lost in a mist, trying to find his way,

unseeing and groping. I did not disturb her mood, till after a little while, she seemed to emerge from the mist of memory, and said, "I believe we saw the tree of music being transplanted from Fateh Ali Khan to Nusrat."

At this the eyes of the three sisters were bedimmed.

Kaniz spoke again, "It was an inspiring moment, when our father left us forever. He called us all around him and asked us to chant the Kalima. We were doing his bidding, though while doing this, our hearts were sad and heavy. At that moment, we felt that he looked hard at Nusrat and he seemed to transfer all his knowledge and power and skill to Nusrat, through his eyes."

Fateh Ali Khan's soul soared to heavens amid the chant of the Kalima.

## NUSRAT, FARRUKH and RAHAT

All for one and one for all

If Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the bright moon of music then Farrukh, his younger brother is twinkling star in the musical firmament. Farrukh has mature, melodic voice that is trained completely in classical music. He is an expert on harmonium and whatever Nusrat performs with his voice he renders it on his harmonium and gives a guideline to all other members of his party. Farrukh is the most important member of Nusrat's team.

Farrukh is so happy on the popularity of his brother, Nusrat. But he remembers it all; days when people had almost lost all hope of Nusrat ever making good. Some in their spite wanted the tradition of qawwali to disappear from the family for ever. Farrukh therefore is grateful to Allah for Nusrat's name resounding all over the world.

Nusrat, he says, "is now the symbol of the family name and its tradition. He is the prestige that has been brought to our house. His popularity and the respect he commands has immortalized our family. Nusrat is a living legend.

He has seen the living legend in days of struggle and suffering. He has seen it all, with his eyes. "Music", he says, "has been an obsession with Nusrat. He has practised days and nights in a lonely room. He has been in that room for days and never saw the light of sun and cool rays of moon during those days and nights. He immersed himself in his musical work. He came out of that room when he could dazzle the world with his great skill and mastery."

"Farrukh, tell me one thing. What do you feel when you see Nusrat being decorated with awards, medals and you see him appreciated whole-heartedly and rewarded so richly?"

"I think of only on thing".

What is that?

"That may Allah reward him more and more with greater honour. Honours such as have not been received by any other artiste. We consider his honour to be ours and his unprecedented popularity to be our own. Our hearts beat for each other, we feel each others pain and pleasure. We may have different names and bodies but our hearts beat as one."

In Nusrat's team, a voice has drawn the notice of the

people to itself. The voice has been trained by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. In qawwali that voice follows that of Nusrat and sometimes accompanies it. It is the voice of Rahat Ali Khan. He is Farrukh's son.

Handsome, fair, polite, musical and looking rather like a matinee idol, Rahat is very hard-working young man. During a qawwali when he repeats the sargam, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan looks towards him with loving eyes and nods his appreciation. It is the time of training for Rahat. Rahat is trying to learn with humility. Nusrat as a mentor is proud on seeing the young sapling growing into a tree. Rahat is his spiritual son. He expects his spiritual son to learn as much as he can, he drinks in the knowledge that the masestros like to compare with the deep sea. Farrukh is a happy witness to the process. The thought that the future of music is safe in the hand of the coming generation, gives him satisfaction. Nusrat is doing all this in his faith that Farrukh and Rahat are his two pillars of strength and courage.

"Farrukh and Rahat are my two eyes and the qawwali party is like body. Without them I am nothing, useless."

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the focus of all the love, devotion and affection that Farrukh can shower on him. On the face of Nusrat, Farrukh tries to find the likeness of father Fateh Ali Khan, and Farrukh loves him even more than ever before:

In this world where there is so much to see

There is no one like you:

Riffat, wife of Farrukh is housewife. She is so happy at seeing her son Rahat singing in the company of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. When I asked her opinion about Nusrat, she was almost in tears. In an emotional-laden accent she said,

" Nusrat Khan Sahib is to me like my father. My parents have died but he has never let me feel their absence. He is kind, sympathetic and affectionate that I seldom remember my parents. Whenever there is any religious or family occasions and we feel as if the whole world has come to us. It is difficult to find such a loving, affectionate man."

I talked about Rahat and commented on his becoming an important member of the qawwali party. " How would you like it ?" I asked.

" The two are like sun and moon. I pray for them night and day. May they live long and happily and I pray to Allah to make them more prosperous." She replied.

While she was saying this, her radiant face reflected the depth and sincerity of her words.

## NAHEED NUSRAT

There was a time Naheed Nusrat was the sole possessor and owner of Nusrat's dominion. But now the domain is shared by Nusrat's only daughter Nida - Nadia as she is called by everyone. Naheed has happily handed over the half of her possession to her daughter. Nida is the cynosure of Nusrat and Naheed and their hearts beat for her.

Naheed is the daughter of Salamat Ali Khan (late) and the first cousin of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Their marriage was arranged by the fathers - the two brothers - but then both Naheed and Nusrat were also part of the delicious conspiracy or rather what we call " understanding " between the two. After marriage, her name underwent a change : from Ghazala Naheed she becomes Naheed Nusrat.

Naheed is a graceful, sober lady and a housewife. She loves

Nusrat to the point of distraction and considers herself a most lucky woman that she is the wife of great and popular artist Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. His increasing fame however makes Naheed more confident of herself. She says :

" Whenever I go to a party everyone looks at me as I am Nusrat's Fateh Ali Khan's wife, and then I feel proud of it".

Men who usually are away from home for business, trust their wives with their income and seldom ask about it again. The ladies rule the home. Wives love such husbands and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is such a husband. Naheed says about him :

" Khan Sahib is very generous. He never asks about the money he gives me. When I spend that I ask for more...."

A popular artist belongs more to the people and less to his wife. His time is not his own. He is helpless in such things. Even if he wants to be free his own secretary will not let him be. He is there with the diary of engagements. The wives of great artists are usually unhappy and their husband's fame is their rival. Once a popular actor was asked about the most hated thing by his wife : " My secretary ", was the answer. The secretary who reminds him about the previously arranged programme.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is an extremely busy person. One day he is in Japan, the other day he is in South Africa. You never know when he is in France and then in Canada. If



he has his breakfast in Islamabad, he might have his lunch in Karachi.

How do you like this hectic life of your husband? I asked Naheed.

She shrugged in reply. The shrugging is more mental than Physical. " I know he is busy. He has to be away to fulfil his engagements. In his absence we talk to him on telephone. I am Nida talk to him daily on telephone".

I understand all this and I know you are a devoted, loving wife. But every good wife has some little grievance against her husband. Do you have any ? I asked.

Naheed was perhaps waiting for such a question. She smiled, " Yes ". She said, " I have only one complaint against him".

What's that ?

" He makes last minute changes on arrival home. We think that the day of his arrival is fixed and we wait for him with his favourite dish. And then the telephone rings and he says that he is not coming".

Then ?

Then everything for us becomes meaningless, sad. At that moment I consider all his programs and engagements as my rivals. But this is rather for the time being. When he arrives and makes an excuse, we are all so happy. Everything

seems to sing".

Singing reminds me of another thing. Now that everybody is singing his songs, which of Nusrat's song do you like best ?

" I like two songs. When he is away from home, I think of his song "Aajaa, tainoon akhian udeek dian" (come my eyes await you), and when he gets ready to leave for abroad, or some engagement away from home, there is the song " Na jaavin dholnaan " ( Do not go my love )".

And what song does Nida like most?

" She likes best the cassette "Dam must qalander" She has never liked any other of her father's cassette so much. She keeps it under her pillow when she goes to bed." Naheed replied.

When Khan Sahib is not at home what did you like to do ? Any hobby ?

" When he is home or not, I always pray for his well-being, his health and his long life. May he live long. This is what I do all the time. It is my hobby or even my worship" She said.

She is also very unhappy about his fans who never leaves him alone. The family is seldom allowed to enjoy a personal and private life.

" Once Khan Sahib took me to Liberty Market (in

Lahore) for a bit of shopping. When people saw they came crowding round and praised him a lot. I was left alone, isolated. Even in his company I was made to feel lonely. Everyone seemed to have a proprietary rights on him and even my time was taken away from me. This is the real loss of being the wife of a famous person. He belongs more to his fans and less to his wife". She said.

## **IQBAL QASURI**

### **INCHARGE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Ustad Fateh Ali Khan suffered from the fatal disease of cancer. Akram Shami took him to specialist doctors in Karachi. It was all in vain. The incurable disease had bitten deep with its terrible fangs. The Ustad returned to Faisalabad. During this period of agony and pain, there was one pupil who attended to him, night and day, hovered round and was at call, all the time. If the Ustad turned in his spare sleep he would spring to his feet.

He was Iqbal Qasuri. The Ustad called him his son. As the eyes of the Ustad closed for the last time the bewildered pupil stared wide-eyed and unbelieving. In a state of shock he lost consciousness. For almost a month he was in a state of semi-coma. God had willed that, after the father he should serve the son.

He had returned to this world, after touching the threshold of death.

Naushad, the Indian composer once said in an interview that the poet Shakil Badayuni was with him for 25 years, and during this period he lived with his family only for a fraction of this time.

This might be more true about Iqbal Qasuri than anyone else. He has to look after the affairs of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan that he has hardly any time for his own family. Iqbal Qasuri who sometimes chooses to call himself as Iqbal Naqibi is among the old pupils of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. He was an active member of the party. After the death of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan when Nusrat came forward to lead the qawwali party Iqbal was with him and is still with him, but in a different capacity. In the beginning he was on stage with the party, now he is off stage, looking after the affairs of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. The nature of his work has changed. He is not a member of the singing party. He is now secretary to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

He is an old friend and companion of Nusrat and keeps himself attached to Nusrat like his shadow. They always are together and Iqbal takes care of the travel arrangements, the programmes, the cooking, stay and all other things. He loves Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and he loves to look after him and his affairs.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan needs such a man.

"He is a simple man, a dervash", said Iqbal. "If I am not vigilant, the whole thing will come down like a house of cards."

He was right. A welfare organisation had obtained dates for two concerts by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, without monetary arrangement and was trying to have promise of concert for the third time. Nusrat did not understand the hint and gave his promise for a third concert.

At this, Iqbal protest, "What are you doing? If the horse becomes friendly to the grass from where it will eat?"

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan pointed upwards with his finger.

"He who has created the horse and the grass will give us everything".

Iqbal is a loyal friend and companion of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He has served Nusrat in illness and adversity and now he attends to his affairs while the star of Nusrat is rising.

"I love Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan for two reasons", he said.

What are those? "In Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, there is another great man, whom I love", he replied.

"Who is that man?" "Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. It is he who is winning all the honours. He is winning the hearts. Have you ever noticed how many things are common

between the Ustad and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan ? "

For instance ? " Fateh Ali Khan put a stamp of great love in the hearts of his listeners. Now it is Nusrat who is following the examples of his father. You cannot miss the lightness of Fateh Ali Khan on Nusrat's face. Ustad Fateh Ali Khan was a dervish, a god-fearing, man of God, deep in a spiritual mood. He was without greed and without any moral taint in him. Nusrat is also spotless, and clean, innocent as a babe. I have been with him throughout all tours abroad. He was never strayed towards temptation. His eye has wandered around. He is lost in his music and has acquired mastery in music like his father. Sometimes I feel as if the spirit of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan descends in Nusrat and rolls the rosary of Allah's sacred name. " Saying this Iqbal turned towards me and said,".

" Have you ever witnessed a show by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan ?"

Yes, of course ! " Then you must have noticed his face. As he sings, his face acquires a spiritual grace. I have seen him singing in huge concerts in France, Japan, Canada, Britain and South Africa. There the audiences are in thousands, atleast 40,000 in each concert. There Nusrat creates a spiritual aura, a kind of awe among his audiences. Do you know the reason for this ? "

No. You tell me !

"Because he is a really good, pious man like his

father",replied Iqbal."One day a girl came to me, during a concert and whispered in my ear that on the face of my "boss" she could see the peace, the spiritual calm that she has seen on the face of Gautam.

Why is it so ?

" While he sings the praise of Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali his whole being is involved in his singing. Nusrat is soldier of God. He sings for God. He sings the qawwali-the art from six hundred years old which cleanses the heart of all the malice. It was Fateh Ali Khan first and then Nusrat is following the footsteps of his father. I am fortunate that I have seen them both. Fateh Ali Khan worked for glory of Islam through his singing - like sowing the seeds of his faith in the hearts of his listeners. Now Nusrat is doing it."

As Iqbal finished talking, he looked at the heap of money before him. He was counting the currency notes and then placing them in different piles in front of him. I looked at him and his preoccupation rather absorption in counting the money and said : Your boss loves money ?

" Not much ", Iqbal replied rather non-chalantly.

What do you mean ?

Iqbal took off his glasses and polishing the lenses said," You are suffering from some misconception that all this money belongs to Nusrat and that he likes to keep it in



his strong box. It is not like that. He gets only one part of it, rather one share, a fraction of it."

What do you mean, one share ? Could you explain ?

Iqbal gave me to following detail: " When we recieve the money, or our fees for the concert, it is divided in 27 portions and is distrubuted in the following manner :

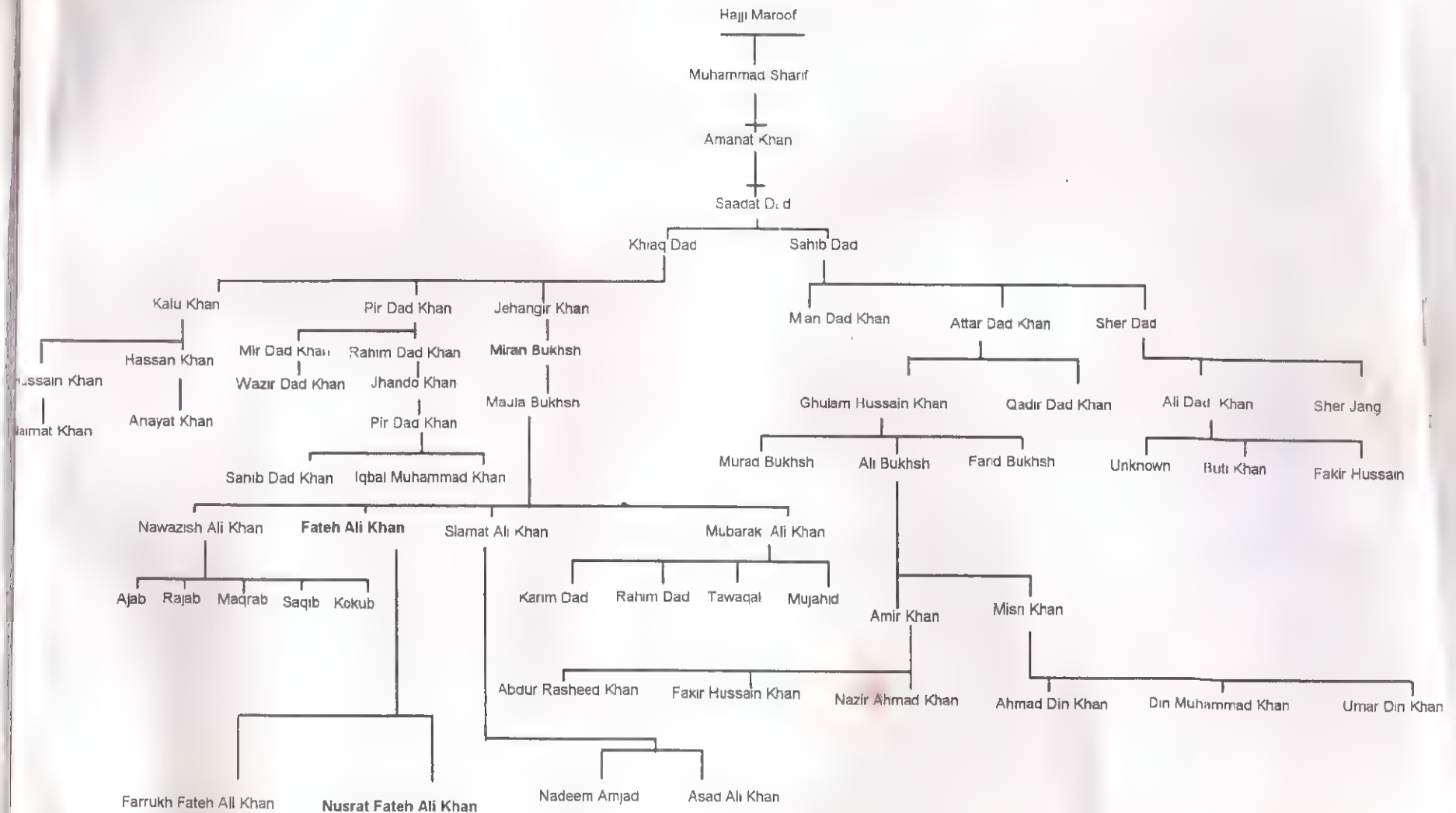
For the members of the party 10

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan	1
Farrukh Fateh Ali Khan	1
Rahat Farrukh	1
Secretary (Iqbal himself)	1
Sister of Nusrat Fateh Ali	4
2 others now dead	2
for votive offering	1



Ustad Mubarak Ali Khan, Ustad Salamat Ali Khan and Ustad Fateh Ali Khan with an Inidan Minister Mr. Chohan.

# The Family Tree of Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan



## NUSRAT'S COMPANION

**FARRUKH FATEH ALI KHAN:-** Younger brother of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Farrukh has mature, melodic voice that is trained completely in classical music. Farrukh is the most important member of Nusrat's team.

**RAHAT FARRUKH FATEH ALI KHAN:-** Son of Farrukh Fateh Ali Khan, handsome, fair, polite, musical and looking rather like a matinee idol. He is the spiritual son of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. It is the period of training for Rahat.

**ASAD ALI KHAN:-** Son of Late Salamat Ali Khan and cousin of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He is performing with Nusrat for the last twenty years. He has developed his own style and beauty in singing.

**MUHAMMAD IQBAL NAQIBI:-** He has a pivotal position in the party as the private secretary for Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. All the activities revolve around him and he organizes all the tours and concerts. He is an old friend and companion of Nusrat and hangs around him like a shadow for the last twenty years.

**DILDAR HUSSAIN:-** He is the most important member of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's party. He accompanies him on Tabla for the last twenty five years. He is a well seasoned rhythm player. Nusrat has a great trust on him.

**RAHMAT ALI:-** He is an old member of the party. Supports Nusrat on the harmonium with great skill.

**KOKUB:-** Son of Nawazish Ali Khan and cousin of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He has toured with Nusrat.

**GHULAM FARID:-** A man of lai and sur. Travelled with Nusrat to many countries of the world. He is around Nusrat for a long time.

**KHALID MAHMOOD:-** An old member of Nusrat's team, young, energetic and perfect.

**ALYAS HUSSAIN:-** He is around Nusrat for a long time. He maintains the record of Khan Sahib's lyrics, qawwalis and ghazals.



Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan



in questa pagina e in quella  
accanto: Nusrat Fateh Ali  
Khan. Illustrazioni di Gary Jo  
Gardenhire





Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan





Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan with a news reporter.



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan with a news reporter.



Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and Jay



Amjad Ali Khan, Khurshid, Daughter of Ustad Alah Rakha and Mehdi



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan with his awards



Nusrat and Farrukh with their family





Imran Khan, Vinod Khana, Mik Jagger and Iqbal Naqib



A.C. not a, an K, and show in Britain.



Imran Khan, Vinod Khana, Nusrat and Mic Jagger.



Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan with his awards





Members of Pakistan cricket team at Nusrat's residence



Rameez, Aqib, Nusrat, Waseem, Farrukh, Iqbal Naqibi and Children



Rameez, Aqib, Nusrat, Naheed Nusrat and Waseem Akram



Nusrat, Nida Imran Khan and Iqbal Naqibi



Farrukh, Nusrat, Imran Khan, Iqbal and Nida





Imran Khan, Iqbal and Nusrat



Iqbal Naqibi Nusrat and Imran Khan



Imran Khan With his young fans



Imran Khan Nusrat and Naheed Nusrat



Nida in Germany



Riffat Farrukh, and Naheed Nusrat



Wajahat, Sidra, Nida, Aroo,, and Asher

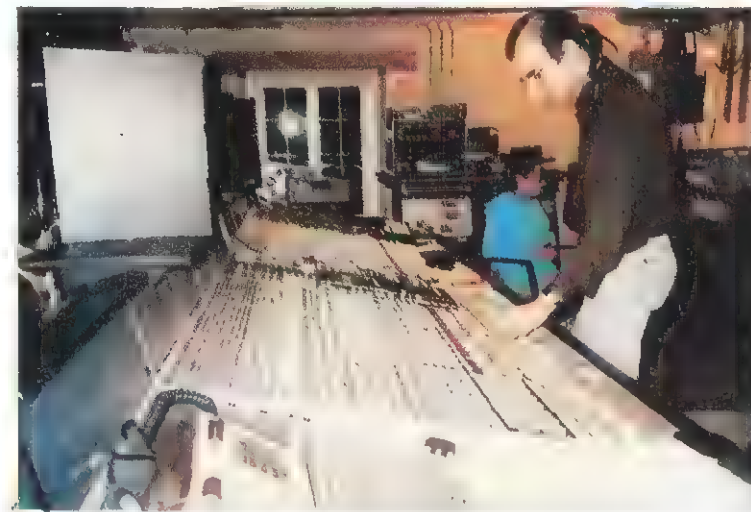




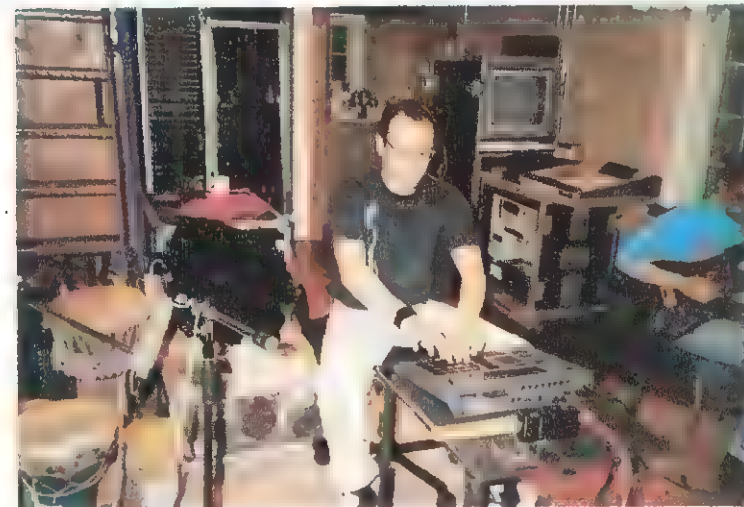
Riffat Farrukh, Amana Farrukh Afsheen Farrukh and Naheed Nusrat



Riffat, Naheed, Afsheen, Nida And Ayesha

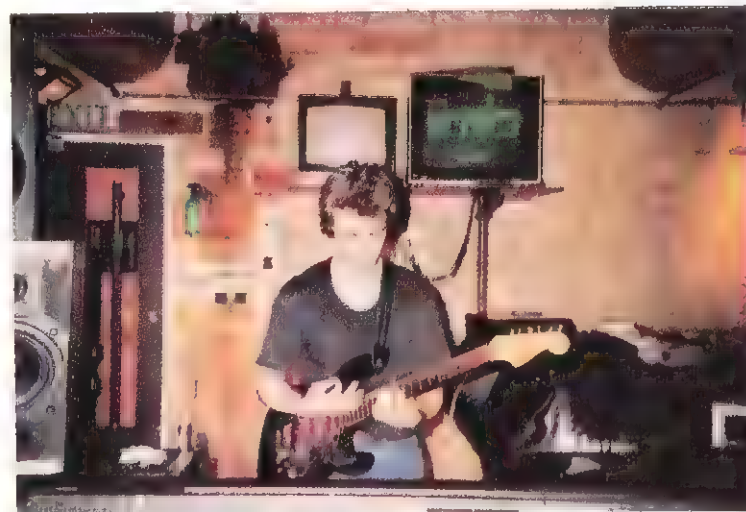


Peter Gabriel's recording studio where Must Must was recorded





Peter Gabriel's recording studio where Must Must was recorded

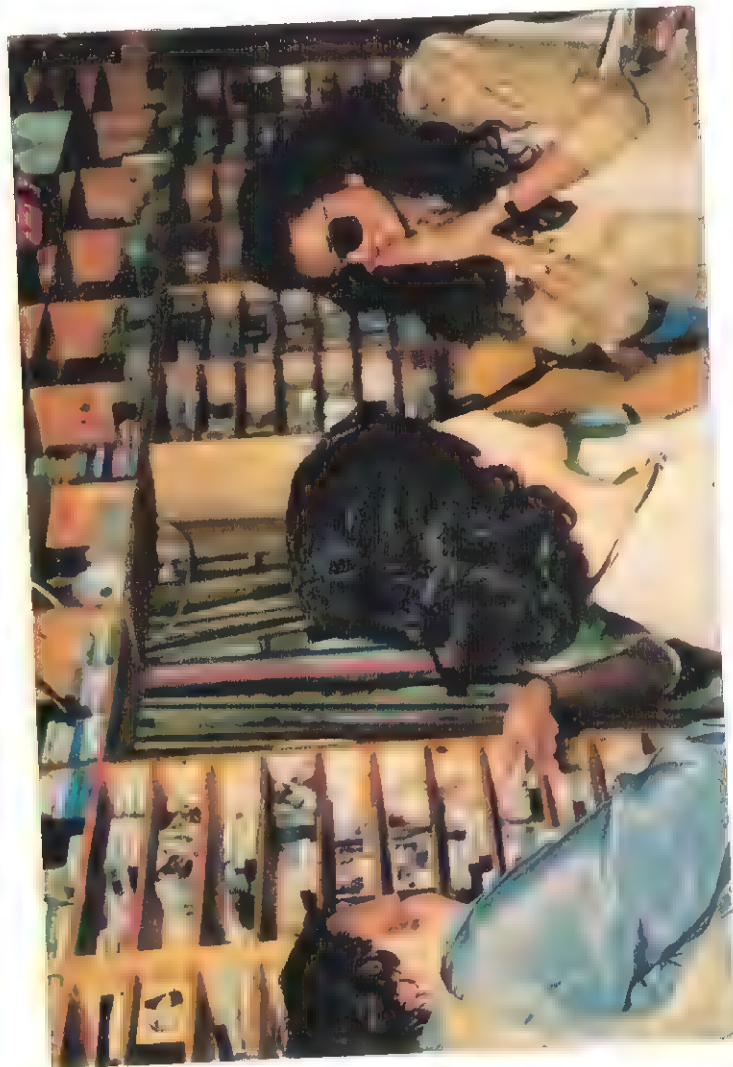


Micheal Brook during the recording of Must Must



Tabla player Dildar Hussian during the recording of Must Must.





Rekha and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

### I AM THE FIRST PUPIL SIR:

Dark, large, tall, heavy mousetaches, squarish teeth, with a little naughtiness on the face and a brightness in his eyes, he leaned forward and took out a cigarette from the packet of Gold Leaf lying on the table, lit up and said", Ruby Sahib!

I am the first pupil though I belonged to the rival party of this family. My father's family was inimical to Fateh Ali Khan and his family but the family of my mother were devoted to them".

He was Rafiq Gohar who had rebelled against his own people and had come to Fateh Ali Khan, more as an acolyte than an apprentice to learn music, from the maestro.

"But I have learnt nothing from him, I have only seen his feet".

Rafiq was expressing his love and devotion for the man he revered more as a spiritual guide, a guru, than a teacher of music. He sat at his feet and served the great Qawwal.

"Why"? I asked.

"Fateh Ali Khan was a dervesh, a man of God, a saint. He was a spiritual power. He would cast a glance at a man's face and tell him about his fortunes. He would sit in his baithak without food for four days at a stretch. Such saintly people are rare".

"One day Fateh Ali Khan Sahib asked me to fetch a glass of sherbet. I got up and went out. Worried, because I had no money in my pockey. As I went into the bazar I prayed for some angel of mercy to give me money for the sherbet. But there was no angel around and then my eyes lit on my feet where a 100-rupee note was lying on the road. I took up the currency note bought the sherbet and came back to Khan Sahib. Khan Sahib said to me "You did not take any money from me" I replied, "Ustad Ji I think you had thrown the money right on my path. I had forgotten to take money from you but you did not".

Rafiq was getting sentimental and went on, "The things I know about the family, no ones does. I am the first pupil of the family. I have served the family and have learned to live in humility".

Then he leaned towards me and whispered, "Nusrat

is also a dervaish, like his father. He has taken after his father, in everything, in habits and qualities". Then he was lost in thought and in the times past.

"It looks like yesterday to me when Nusrat went to school with a bag hanging by his shoulder. He never wore shalwar kameez in those days. He would wear knickers. He would attend his school and then at home he would be taught by master Abdul Aziz. The Master Ji had also taught the elder Khan sahib. Nusrat was lucky, He would readily grasp whatever was taught to him"

He stopped for a moment and I interrupted him with a question", Nusrat's birth must have been celebrated with great joy and pomp"?

Rafiq went into an ecstasy of nostalgia. "Oh, it was a celebration throughout the sub-continent. All the singers expressed their joy. Nusrat was the son after four sisters. Ustad Fateh Ali Khan had a great wish for a son. Ruby Sahib, the family and the race run only through sons. Everybody who knew Khan Sahib, congratulated him. Letters arrived from all corners of the subcontinent. There were celebrations and music concerts. The memory of those days makes me a little sad".

"Why? I asked.

"Those times and the people of those times have gone. But my heart is filled with joy when I see Nusrat. Fateh

Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan had conquered the subcontinent with their art, but Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is like Alexander the Great. He has conquered the whole world. But, you know, there are places which even the great conquerer had not even visited. Is it not like that?"

"You are right Rafiq, Alexander the Great never went to Canada, the United States, of America, South Africa and Japan".

Rafiq almost jumped on his seat. "Yes, yes, the name of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan echoes and will continue like that in all those countries...

"Nusrat is a gourmet an quite and eater. We ate 70 kebabs each, sometime. Boota's shop in Faisalabad ran because of Nusrat along. When Nusrat went to Lahore he ate at the Carry Home, the restaurant known for its food.

Rafiq was again back into the past. I offered him a cigarette, offered him light and asked: Rafiq, Is there anything that you like most in Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan?

"Yes", Rafiq replied, "In more than 40 years I have never heard a swear word or word of abuse from his lips. He does not know how to swear and give someone a bad name. Such word does not even dare to be on his tongue. Sometimes in extreme passion he would express a word or so rather in a mild manner. Indeed he was brought up very nicely, in a nice home and among nice people. the training in music and his preoccupation with sur and lai has not allowed

him time for such things. When Ustad Fateh Ali Khan started giving him lessons on tabla, Nusrat's mothers asked him why he was doing that. "Do you want that he should never lead and always sit behind others? At this fateh Ali Khan smiled and said that he was imparting such lessons that those who master such lessons never sit behind others but always sit in the front. And now as you see Nusrat now leads them all.

He heaved a huge sigh, redolent of peace and contentment. Then he said to me: Nusrat too is a man of God. We were sleeping in his baithak, one day, after seeing the movie "Aag Ka Darya". It was 2.30 in the morning and I heard him talking to someone. I sat up wondering who was talking to. When I asked him about it he said that not all things were to be asked and replied. Then he asked me to get up and go along with him. I asked, where? Lahore he said. He then took me to Lahore. We said our prayers at the mazar of Data Sahib and then he prayed for me: Oh Allah, whether he learns to sing or not, grant him life of honour and respect. Ruby Sahib, I believe Nusrat's prayers were granted. I know nothing about music and singing. I have a life of honour and respect.

## Two Uncrowned Kings

Two uncrowned kings: one in the world of cricket and the other in the world of music. Their fans are innumerable. Both of them have become symbols of their country. One is Imran Khan and the other is Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. They are good friends who recognize each other's greatness. When the two meet they consider their moment of meeting the capital moment, in terms of value, in terms of emotional investment.

When Pakistan Cricket team was losing match after match, in the World Cup 1992, Nusrat rang up Imran Khan, from Japan. "Khan Sahib, your team is loosing matches, and people are blaming me for this. They say ever since the team is listening to Nusrat's qawwalis, it has forgotten how to win." Imran Khan cool as ever, replied, "Khan Sahib, don't worry. Our nation is a bit emotional. If we are aspiring for

higher goals, we have to stoop a little also. If someone talks to you now, tell him, we will Inshaallah, bring the World Cup." And the team did bring home the cricket World Cup 1992.

Nusrat has long standing relationship and contact with the family of Imran Khan. The elder members of Imran's clan were fans of Fateh Ali Khan. Imran Khan is an ardent admirer of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. During the last couple of years, the admiration has developed into a craze. Ever since Imran Khan sat through a concert by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, for a night, in a New York hotel, his craze reached new heights. He calls it the most memorable, a most beautiful night of his life.

Plato has said, "You must sit like a child before the truth". Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is such a truth and Imran Khan sits before him like a child. The man who is supposed to be rather serious, severe, touchy, even standoffish and haughty, in common man's imagination belies all this in Nusrat's presence. A look on his photographs with Nusrat reveals him to be a contented, serene rather a happy man, a man at peace with the world. Nusrat himself is a fan of the cricketer.



## FOUR FAGS OF MUNDRI SAIN

Books on the famous persons are full of exaggerated incidents and supernatural elements. All these elements are the essential part of the whole because they notably; add to the story but also play a part in the development of the personality and life. Such things are also accented and seldom do we tend to doubt their veracity. Even such unbelievable things are said as the legend that Napoleon could read 500 books a day, or that according to his biographer, Napoleon had marked the Island of St. Helena with a circle round it, in his geography book, with the words : Helena - my fate.

Lives of great men are filled with such prophesies or prophetic incidents that cast their long shadows on the lives of such people. Some great people are supposed to have

made their own announcements of being great one day. All such people make history and they are not many.

The sub-continent of India and Pakistan is the land of mysteries, pirs, fakirs and saints and men of God. The land is full of their mazars, shrines and tombs where people go to seek happiness, contentment, peace of mind. They visit the sacred places where they believe they are led towards the path of right and truth and faith. In his life Fateh Ali Khan and after him Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan visits these spiritual places, in all humility and reverence and has gathered lots of great good wishes of all these people of saintly goodness who in their lives had spread the message of Islam in the sub-continent and had treated the people without prejudice of faith colour, caste and creed. In his childhood, Nusrat was taught to repeat the names of Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali. Singing of these names has been his hobby as well as vocation. East or West, wherever he goes he practices what he considers to be his mission. Those who are intimate with his life link his fame spreading all around with an incident concerned with Sain Mundri and his four cigarettes.

The mazar of Sain Mundri is situated near Shahkot. There is always a crowd of people on the mazar. Sain Mundri had the reputation of being an angry man who would not like people to crowd him. When someone wanted to go near him he would be shooed away with a sharp gesture. When the late Sain was kind to someone he would cry, " Go there,

have a cup of water and get lost! " That was supposed to be a great act of kindness.

One day Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and his party were travelling from Jaranwala to Faisalabad. Someone remarked that they should pay a visit to Sain Mundri. The driver stopped the van. Sain mundri looked up and saw people disembarking from the vehicle. Nusrat was still in his seat and was taking his time coming out of the van when Mundri Sain jumped up and came running towards the van.

" Get back everyone ! I will help him get down !", shouted Mundri.

Everyone was stunned at this. Never in their wildest dreams could they imagine that Mundri Sain would be welcoming anyone, in such a manner. Mundri Sain brought Nusrat out of the van and walked him towards where he was sitting. Then he turned towards Nusrat's companions and shouted : " Do you know this man ? He is a man of great good fortune When he recites the names of Allah and the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) even the angels come down to listen to him."

Mundri Sain repeated this again and again, and as they sat down he offered a cigarette to Nusrat after lighting it. Nusrat does not smoke and was hesitant in accepting it.

Mundri Sain insisted, " Come, have it !" Nusrat took the cigarette and stealing his hand behind his back, handed it to one his companions. The Sain was not missing any of it. He lit another cigarette and then another and gave them to

Nusrat.

" Come and have a smoke !", he insisted in a premtory manner. Nusrat took the cigarettes and did not know what to do about them. Then one of his pupils Rafiq Gohar whispered in his ear, " Take these and put them to your lips and don't inhale the smoke " Nusrat acted on his advice. As the two cigarettes were finished the Sain offered another two and Nusrat repeated his performance, taking to his lips and not inhaling the smoke. On this, Nusrat's uncle Salamat Ali Khan and Nawazish Ali Khan also asked the Sain to give them a cigarette but the Sain declined to accede to their request and said to Nusrat, " These are not four cigarettes, that I have given to you. I have made you the king and monarch of east, west, north and south. Go and recite the Holy names of Allah and his Prophet ( Peace be upon him)." And Nusrat is doing his bidding.

Nusrat's very first tour abroad was postponed just at the time of his departure. When he went to Islamabad with a friend he came to know that it was all due to a bureaucratic mistake. When the difficulty was removed and the mistake was rectified, the tour was undertaken. He was in a hurry to reach Faisalabad to make preparations for the travel abroad. Nusrat hired a van. Rafiq Gohar sat in the front and Nusrat laid himself down in the back seat. As they reached near Gujar Khan, 50 km from Islamabad, the front wheel slipped out and the vehicle crashed into a tree, near a ditch. The driver and Rafiq were injured but Rafiq forgot his own injury

and looked back into the car for his mentor. Nusrat was not there. He looked around and was surprised to see Nusrat sitting in a relaxed manner, on the roadside.

" How did you reach here? " he asked.

" I don't know ", replied Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

" Is there any injury ", he asked. " No ", Nusrat answered.

" But how ?" Nusrat smiled and holding onto his pupil, he raised himself on his feet and said, " Such thing should not be asked".

After some time another accident took place when Nusrat and his party were coming back from chak-8 and were returning to Faisalabad. Their van turned turtle, completely overturned and almost everyone, including the driver was injured. Nusrat was sleeping, as usual, on the back seat. At that moment they looked for him and he was not in his seat. He was sitting cross legged, in a relaxed manner, on the road side.

" How did you come here, Khan Sahib ?" Everyone asked.

" I don't know," was the answer.

" Are you injured ?" And the answer was "No".

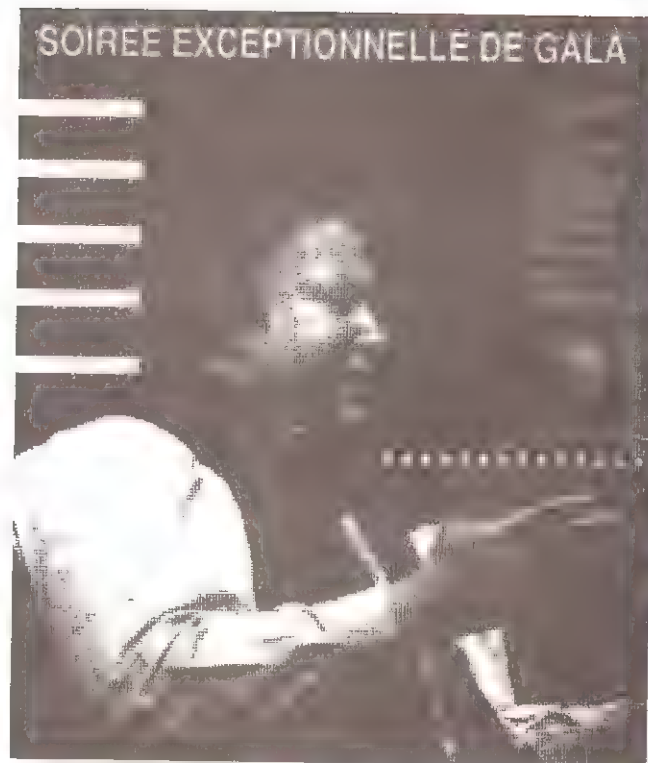
Once again, the question was how was it possible that he was unscathed in such an accident. The answer, once again, was, " Such question are not asked ".

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan did not give a satisfactory answer to the members of his party. But everybody knew

that Allah protects those who recite His names and who recite the revered names of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him)

**Loud Whispers**





"as soon as I begin to sing  
I am immersed in my music  
and nothing exists any longer".

This is about Nusrat's show in London. I had invited Mick Jagger to the show and he said he could spare five minutes for it, as he was very busy. I told Nusrat about it and said to him, "If Mick Jagger does come, he should not go before the concert is over." And that is what happened. Mick Jagger came and stayed for three hours and listened to Nusrat's qawwali.

This proves his greatness, and for this Nusrat has worked very hard. He has held many shows for my hospital project and it is because of the Nusrat shows that I have been able to collect funds for the project in European and American cities. Nusrat did all those shows free. He is a truly great artist.

IMRAN KHAN (EX CAPTAIN)  
PAKISTAN CRICKET TEAM

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan has arrived in the world of art, like a mythical character, with a magic wand in his hand. He has turned everyone crazy after him, casting a spell, by waving the magic wand on the surs. The whole world - everyone is a fan of this one man. It is a unique instance in the history of the art of singing.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is representative of that combination of the classical and the Sufic singing called Qawwali. It has a tradition of 700 years, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's art is the climax of the Qawwali. He is perhaps the last man who has done so much for Qawwali and has spread it in all the countries, the world over.

MUHAMMAD ALI  
FILM ACTOR (PAKISTAN)

I certainly have a sufi heart which was lying dormant for years, and has been revived by the genius of Khan Sahib. His art goes behind any religion as he reaches and feeds the universal soul, all human beings have in their depth.

PIERROT  
PIERRE ALAIN BAUD (FRANCE)



**"I'd go on to the pitch with Nusrat  
Fateh Ali ringing in my ears"**

—Miandad

I met Khan Sahib in 1991 and I am a great fan of this great artist, well known all over the world. It's an honour to be here in Pakistan and attend URS festival and be close to a man of such high calibre, ("Khan Sahib is a God sent Messiah"). At times when I am indulged (in trans) in Nusrat's Qawwalis, "I feel I am in heaven"

**RAJ JAMMU**

Graduate School of Education,  
University of California Los Angeles (UCLA),

405 Highland ave

Los Angeles, CA 90025.

It is most impossible to say or write anything about Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. It is like trying to imprison the wind in one's grip. As one cannot tie a knot with wind so it is not possible to weave a net of words round his art.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is a living legend, an ever shining, bright star on the face time. He is immortal and his singing is eternal. He transports his audience from the mundane to the spiritual world. His singing is a spiritual voyage - a voyage replete with peace and an emotional, cordial and visionary bliss. It is impossible to escape his spell. He is a musician who turns his charmed audience into statues.

**FIRDOUS JAMAL**  
FILM AND T.V. ACTOR (PAKISTAN)



December 1990

# **NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN**

**Musst Musst**

REAL WORLD RWLP 15

Pakistan's most eminent Qawwali singer didn't just complement Peter Gabriel's surprise show at 1988's WOMAD festival, his spiralling voice supplied a transcendental note into the proceedings. Nusrat's second album for Real World, *Musst Musst* is a similar East-West summit meeting, overseen by Michael Brook, ambient composer, Eno associate, the man who helped Mary Margaret O'Hara shape her album and, more recently, produce Youssou N'Dour. Nusrat improvises his scats and scales over Brook's carefully cultivated backing tracks — hence the juxtaposition of shimmering steel guitar, Chinese flute and a shape-shifting ambient carpet — with a voice that sounds in touch with the Gods. Bristol dance remixers Massive Attack even shape up their own version of the title track by sliding in a slinky Soul II Soul dub-reggae beat, though at the other end, Brook leaves in more traditional Qawwali like Tana Derv and Tara Deem. Despite such lush cushioning, the man's devotional style is still an extreme sensation. Another striking world fusion ★★★

Martin Aston

DECEMBER 1990

# **NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN**

**Musst Musst**

(Real World)

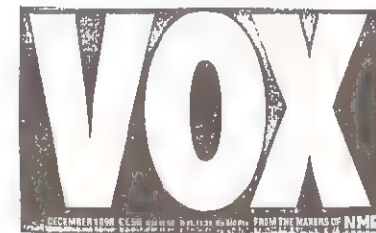
NUSRAT'S DEBUT ON REAL World was a far more sedate affair than this never straying too far from the devotional Qawwali singing style at which he excels. But *Musst Musst* has a much greater feeling of experimentation and

collaboration, with various studio boffins including label boss Peter Gabriel improvising around their awesome vocalist's working space.

Ambient mists of distant memory, clattering junkyards where cultures collide, bubbling Cajun style backbeats and rippling waterfalls of colour all surround Nusrat's voice at different times. But this is no soft-focus trickery to beef up a second-rate talent: that Voice is always lurking in the shadows ready to burst out from these flimsy clothes into intricate yet frenzied fits of howling or impossibly high plateaus of piercing melody.

Beauty spots include the spiralling desert winds of 'The Game', the humming fiction-lank of 'The Cleaning' and a stomping remix of the title track (earmarked as a single) by Massive Attack. Shimmering heavy dub beats give this a low-slung lopsided lode layered with wobbly samples and seductively spaced-out echo effects. Tasteless without ever becoming polite, this song is the acceptable face of the World Music crossover and this album is a *Musst* (that). @

Stephen Da Ion





## Massive Fateh

One record creating a huge stir round Bristol at the moment is the result of a highly unlikely-sounding collaboration between Massive Attack and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Called 'Mustt Mustt' which roughly translates as 'Lost in His Work' (see review in Vinyl) it occurred when Massive Attack heard tapes of the new Nusrat LP, also of that name, and offered to give it their inimitable treatment. A truly original mix of dub sounds and Nusrat's chants from the Koran is the result but what did the great man think of his music gaining that certain earthquake-like quality? "He was involved right from the beginning and loved the outcome of it all," says Realworld Pressperson, Simon Hopkins, on whose label both the single and LP will be released.

'Mustt Mustt' is out on October 29 with the LP to follow on November 5, both on Realworld Records. Meantime, Venue has six copies of the highly sought-after and soon-to-be staggeringly valuable advance white label edition to give away in this competition. Just answer the following simple question and the first six lucky postcards to be picked out each win a single. Which country does Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan come from? Simple eh? Address your postcards to Nusratomp, Venue, 37-39 Jamaica St, Bristol BS2 8JP.



Reviews of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan are always swimming in superlatives "The music soars, then suddenly dips like a bird diving into water, falling into a hush that just as suddenly explodes in a torrent of notes," enthused another critic.

"Qawwali is powerful stuff - blissful, ecstatic, musically fascinating and totally transporting."

But it is not just the critics and audience which are likely to be moved by a performance of Qawwali - the music has the power to bring the performers themselves into a state of religious ecstasy. Most songs last for about 30 minutes, during a Qawwali ceremony they can go on all night.

Although the Qawwali tradition goes back at least 600 years, Khan is the first exponent to bring his music to a wider, non-Muslim audience. In his last two albums (both on Real World) Mustt Mustt and Shahr-e-Shah the Sufi master has explored various Western styles and rhythms to extend his own musical vocabulary. For instance, the musicians who play on Mustt Mustt come from the US, West Indies, Pakistan and New Zealand. One of the tracks was inspired by a drum pattern donated by Peter Gabriel.

According to Khan, none of this experimentation is particularly foreign to the Qawwali tradition. He explains that over recent years some of the songs have even been given a faster tempo to appeal to a younger Asian generation.

"I make my own style," says Khan, "We update Qawwali with the times."

Dear Mr. Nusrat Fateht,

firstly let me introduce myself. My name is Pedro Vasquez, I am Chilean and at the moment living in Spain, Barcelona. I am turning to you in order to consult you about the possibilities of getting in contact with a Sufi-Master, specialising in dances and Zikhrs. I am member of a group of people who are very interested in Sufism. We would like to continue and extend our apprenticeship and invite a Sufi-Master to Barcelona. I am very grateful for any information you could give me.

Let me take the opportunity to thank you for your coming to Barcelona and thus giving us the opportunity to share the experience of the mystical Sufi music through your mastership. If you need anything during your stay in Barcelona - I am at your disposal.

May God stay in your heart always illuminating your inspiration

Looking forward to hearing from you,  
Yours sincerely

telefono

(93) 432-1185  
Barcelona

Fördergemeinschaft zur Gründung  
einer Friedensuniversität e.V.

FGF

The Peace University of Potsdam

Berlin, November 26th, 1991

Dear Mr. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan,

we are delighted to invite you to share in the work of the international Peace University of Potsdam. Since many years your contribution and commitment to the dialogue of peace have been of great importance and your work is very much appreciated within the purposes of the Peace University.

The focus of this interdisciplinary, interreligious and intercultural university is the holistic ecological school of thought. The Peace University assembles the avant garde of science, research and culture as well as students from all over the world to find new solutions for the problems and experiences that have become the main challenge for the human society. With this emphasis the Peace University especially addresses responsible leaders in politics, economics, culture and the media.

Please let us know if you wish to have more information or to arrange a personal meeting. We would be glad to discuss your possible participation in the Peace University with you or your assistant.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,



Uwe Morawetz  
Chairman



Manina Lassen-Grzech  
Deputy Chairperson

## FRANCE

A nation is known by its cultural heritage and builds its future on its richness. It represents its glorious past and without preserving its tradition and cultural heritage a nation can neither know its present nor can have a vision of its future. A people who are divorced from their past have no future to claim. Thus a living nation never hesitates or drag its feet in preserving its tradition of music, heritage, art, literature and handicrafts. The European nations are very sensitive in these matters and keep their tradition alive by holding festivals and conferences, not only for their own arts and traditions but also organize such occasions in respects of the arts and traditions of other countries, for the purpose of keeping themselves abreast of the cultural events in other countries. They want to know about other nations as they are alert and alive to their own heritage.

The cultural foundation of Japan organizes a music festival every year, in which more than 40 countries participate. The emphasis is on religious and spiritual songs and the festival is known as Spiritual Sons of the World. In 1983, such a music festival was held under the banner of Traditional Music around the World. Besides other countries, Turkey, Morocco, South Africa, Nigeria, India, Japan, Britain, Libya and Pakistan took part in it. The Folk Heritage of Pakistan sent Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and his party to represent Pakistan. During the festival the institution published a number of pamphlets on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and everywhere he went he was given a hearty welcome. During the festival he met the French lady Soudobeh Kia. As the name shows the lady is Turkish, but now living in Paris, is linked with the Ocora Agency of radio France. The agency is specially interested in recording the traditional and ancient music of different countries of the World. She was entrusted the task of recording folk music of Pakistan, on behalf of Radio France. She came to Pakistan and contacted Uxi Mufti the head of the folk heritage institute in Pakistan. During the annual folk festival of the institute she was provided with the opportunities of recording a number of folk artists of Pakistan. After the festival She went to Faisalabad with Uxi Mufti to meet Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

The meeting between the two caused what was later dubbed as "The discovery of a new World". Peter Gabriel used the words "Superstar of Music" and this superstar was

none other than Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

Once in Faisalabad, Ms: Soudobeh Kia was able to complete her assignment and she saw possibilities of something beyond the assignment. She proposed a program to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and entered into an agreement with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, on behalf of Agency Ocora of radio France. On her return to France, she invited him there and the tour proved to be a turning point in the artistic life of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Ms Kia made several recordings on compact discs of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. He simply burst out of the restricted small circle to a wide, wide circle of admirers. He held a number of concerts and received ovation from the European audiences.

During such a concert the Director General of French House of Culture and the Director of the well Known theatre Dele Ville Gerard were among the audience and were greatly impressed by Nusrat's singing and expressed their desire That Nusrat should perform in their institutes and theatres. The two gentlemen had played host to many artists such as Ravi Shanker, Vilayet Hussian and Bismillah Khan. When they invited Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, he pointed towards Ms Soudebeh Kia. He it seemed, was now in her personal charge and that all the concerts and shows in Paris were part of her personal project. Through her effort, both Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and Ms Kia earned a lot of recognition and money. The Parisians had taken a fancy to Nusrat and they were completely under the influence of his Qawwali. It was not

only the externals of music that impressed them but they were also affected by the mystical and spiritual element of his performance. Uxi Mufti, the Executive Director of the Pakistan Folk Heritage Institute, gives an account of a concert held in Paris in 1991 in the following words:

The huge audience of 40,000 was in state of ecstasy. Without understanding a single word they were in frenzy on his music and his melody. Young girls, with their hair flying, came towards the stage and danced for hours on his rhythm. I was so happy and grateful to God that a Pakistani artiste has acquired an international fame. But I also felt sadness over the fact that the samma, tradition of our own should have warmed our hearts, is now being enjoyed by the French.

Uxi Mufti further says, "I went to see Nusrat in the green room, embraced and congratulated him on his success which was because of Allah's blessing and great good wishes of the saints for Nusrat."

There he was right all the way. Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Mubarak Ali Khan Ali Khan have been singing their Qawwalis at the mazars of the saints in the Indian Sub-continent. The spiritual influence protects them like a bulwark. It is the benign spirituality of the saints that has blessed Nusrat's art with such success and honour. The award of Grand Prix to him was one of the high points of Nusrat's career. Before this the award has been given to only

two Asians: the inventor of the Cannon camera and the Indian movie director Sattaya Jit Rey. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the third recipient of the Award. The honour is not only to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, but through it the Pakistani nation feels honoured.

In France Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is extremely popular. People fight and scuffle for obtaining tickets for his concerts. One of his fans outdid them all. When he found that all the tickets have been sold, he refused to be discouraged and did his best to get one. But all his efforts were in vain. The tickets were sold out. At this he went to a stationer's shop, got hold of a marker and a placard and wrote down his appeal in such words:

I have a house, a tractor in my village and came to this concert in my car. I am prepared to give all these, car, tractor and my house, for a ticket for the concert. Any taker..?

Nusrat's secretary Iqbal read the appeal and told Nusrat about it in the greenroom. On this, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan called the man in the greenroom and offered him a place on the corner of the stage.

A few days later, while he was still in France, a group of Israeli boys and girls came to see Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and expressed their appreciation of Nusrat's art and then invited him to hold concert in Tel Aviv for a show on Jacob's well.



Nusrat declined the offer politely saying that he could not do so because of the political differences between Israel and Pakistan. They argued that art was beyond and above such differences, and helps in finishing them. Nusrat agreed with them but told them that the politics of his country was more important to him than any other considerations.

As they engaged in argumentation, Iqbal Qasuri Said, "Do you want our concert at Jacob's well to be our last one?" "Why"? they asked.

"Because", replied Iqbal, "when we return from our concert in Israel to Pakistan, people will shoot us. We cannot go to Israel and cannot hold our last concert."

The French love Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, and a Frenchman Peter Poirot is writing a treatise for PhD on him. According to an article on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, when Peter came here he was astonished to see Nusrat singing with western orchestra. He believed that the theme of his doctoral work was the Nusrat the master of the traditional qawwali. How can such a master sing with western instruments?

I think that he should be told a famous story of a poet who was great favorite of a king and kept his company, day and night, even in a battlefield the king would keep listening to his stirring poetry even during the battle. But one day it so happened that while in the thick of battle the king lost his sword as it slipped from his hands. The poet jumped down the horse, got hold of the sword and attacked the

enemy with great enthusiasm and killed a number of them. At the end of the battle, the king was so pleased with the poet that he designated him as commander-in-chief of the army. The poet was perturbed at this and said with great respect, "Sire, Let me be the court poet. I do not want to be the commander-in-chief".

"But", said the king, "you are an excellent swordsman."

The poet replied. "I did this because I just wanted show you that I could handle the sword with great skill, but I am a poet and not a soldier."

Peter Poirot should therefore be satisfied that Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the master of the traditional qawwali, on whom he wants to do his doctoral work. He has however performed the traditional qawwali singing in accompaniment with the western musical instruments just to show that he can sing his classical tunes with these instruments and the purpose is to give an idea to the haphazard pop singing in Pakistan that the classical singing can be done in this style too. His example is now being followed by quite a few pop singers.

## IKI MASHU

Japan is the favourite country of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. The Japanese people are his fans. They love him, admire him, even worship him. Their love for Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is equalled only by their hatred of atom bomb.

Nusrat went to Japan representing the Institute of Folk Heritage. People heard him with great admiration and published a brochure about him. A life sketch and his art were the theme of an article in the Japanese language magazine "Dance and Songs of Asian Spirit".

This was early days and now Nusrat is the favourite of the Japanese. They consider him a god of music. His huge, almost massive and legendary physique has convinced the Japanese that Nusrat is some heavenly being who has come down on earth to spread joy and happiness with the

music. For Nusrat a tour of Japan is always a source of great satisfaction and emotional peace. On the faces of the Japanese there is a message of love that Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan can read with great spiritual joy. The feeling is mutual as the joy is shared by the Japanese people in equal measure. Whenever there is a concert by Nusrat the Japanese rush towards it calling each other in that direction: Iki Mashu, Iki mashu - the words mean, let's go, let's go.

The words have a delightful background that Nusrat relates with great pleasure but the story has a comic beginning but a tearful ending. The word 'Iki' also means 'twenty one' in Punjabi. Whenever the Japanese uttered these words, the members of Nusrat's party would start counting: twenty one mashu, twenty two mashu, twenty three mashu and so on. The word mashu also has an uncanny resemblance with a word in Urdu and Punjabi that denotes a small weight-measure for precious metals such as gold and silver. The words thus became a constant source of comic delight to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and members of his party. Even the Japanese started enjoying the Pakistani's sense of humour and shared the joke with them. But at the end of the tour when Nusrat and his companions went to board the plane, they repeated the words Iki Mashu to their Japanese friends who responded to it by repeating our joke, saying iki (21) mashu, bai (22) mashu, and then started crying, rather unabashedly on this. It was an such uncharacteristic Japanese exhibition of sentiment. It showed

the measure of their love for him.

Numerous cassettes of Nusrat's singing have been issued in Japan and he is equally popular among old and young, men, women and children. For them he is a re-incarnation of Gautam Buddha. They listen to him in great, silent reverence, putting off their shoes. They are completely under the spell of his style of singing and recognize its spiritual value. They come in crowds to listen to him.

On one occasion, the Crown Prince of Japan, now the Emperor Aki Hito was in the audience. At the end of the concert an official of the palace approached Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, with great respect, and said: If it does not displease you, the Crown Prince wishes to meet you on the stage. Nusrat savoured those moments of sheer love that he experienced from the Japanese and realised the strength and greatness of the oriental tradition. He held the arm of the palace official and saying Iki Mashu, went to pay his respects to the Crown Prince.

How fast the graph of his popularity in Japan has gone up can be seen in another way. In 1987, an article of ten pages was published. But in 1992 a 100-page book was published on him with the title of THE EMPEROR OF QAWWALI -Shahanshah-e-Qawwali. In this book the way Nusrat's personality and art were described could be the work of those who love and admire him.

The Japanese think that in Nusrat's singing is

reflected the glory and beauty that belongs only to gods. His art has a grace and softness, it has a roar as well as an appeal, it possesses a spiritual ecstasy as well as physical sensuousness. When he sings he gives solace to the soul, and relaxation to the body. For them, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is a doctor who attends to their soul and body and who cures the maladies of the hearts. Was it not the wish of his father that Nusrat should become a doctor and Japanese recognised him as one. They do not understand his language, but they are carried in a drift, as if under a spell, lost in the beauty of his art and recognise three words with which they have become familiar: Allah, the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and Ali. These are now for them almost household words that they hum, on returning home, after listening to his qawwali.

The Japanese have written a lot on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Almost every thing about him been published. His place of birth, his old home, pictures of Pakistan landscapes, the map of Faisalabad and those of his father and ancestors. Among the Japanese who have written on his art are:

Yataka Asada  
Takako Tanaka

Toyo Nakamura

So Yamane

Seiko Ito

Motoko Sekiya

Takashi Harada

In days gone, by, language used to be link of communication between the lovers it was described in a persian couplet in this way: The language of my beloved is Turkish and I donot know Turkish language.

The Japanese love Nusrat without knowing his language. His songs are increasingly becoming popular, and more popular in that country. JVC World Sounds has issued more than 40 compact discs and cassettes. Certain corners and portions in the music market have been specially reserved for Nusrat's music and the place is called Nusrat Market.

A Tokyo magazine, "Area Division ", in its issue of June 16, 1992, published an article on the singing of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. In the article, it has been said that music is the best medium between God and man. In great detail, the writer has pointed out the relationship between music and religion. In his context, the writer has praised Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and has given him credit, in glowing terms, for bringing human beings nearer their faith and religious doctrine. Whatever religion a person may follow or may believe in any spiritual practice, the singing of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is bound to bring people closer to their religion or doctrine. The writer is the editor of the periodical and his name is Hiromichi.

## ADELAIDE FESTIVAL

The sky was lit with a bright, full moon. The cool of the night had wiped away the heat of the day. The moonlight filtered through the leaves of the fig trees; In the distance, the sounds and rhythm of orchestra cast their spell on men, women and children, old and young. The Festival was being held in the Botanical Garden of Adelaide. On Saturday Trio Bulkarka was to present his songs. Then the Georgia Group was scheduled. And according to the Sydney Morning Herald, the last man was the unique and un defeatable Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. For the audience of the Festival, Nusrat's qawwali was "the high point" of the whole occasion. Nusrat had touched the spiritual heights with his music and had charmed his audiences.

Nusrat Fateh Ali regularly attends the Australian



Festival in Adelaide. Every year his performance proves to be the show-stopper. Paul Lashmer, the columnist of Observer, Sydney wrote on May 13, 1991:

Nusrat dominates the proceedings with raw-throated tuneful voice capable of astonishing vocal aerobatics....

The title of the article was "The Popular Voice of Islam." Paul Lashmer has open-mindedly recognized the fact that Nusrat is preaching Islam through his pure and spiritual singing and is spreading the message of Islam throughout the world. He merges the divine words of Allah that came to us through the Holy Prophet (PBUH), in his music, and communicates to the people.

After listening to his qawwali "Allah hoo", he was moved to say: " The base line of qawwali is the religion of Islam. Sometime the lyrics are poetry taken from the KORAN."

No doubt the art of Qawwali is based on religious teachings, and the Sufic poetry never transgresses the Quranic thought. Even in Adelaide Festival, his singing is circumscribed by the Sufic poetry and religious thought.

The CDs recorded for WOMAD, however, stick to the traditional modes of singing

More than 70 countries are represented in the Adelaide Festival, including India, Senegal, Japan, China, Britain, Georgia, South Africa, Mali, Canada, Australia

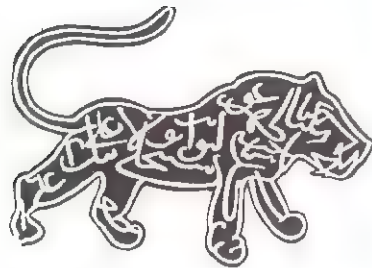
France and Pakistan. Every country is to present its cultural tradition through music. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan has proved his supremacy through oriental music and qawwali.

A critic has said, " Qawwali is a sufic tradition of the sub-continent. It started 700 years ago. But the art of qawwali acquires a magic, a keenness and a sense of wonder when it is rendered by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan has been voted as the most popular singer of Adelaide Festival and his singing is, no doubt, the high point of the Festival.



## WOMAD



WOMAD, World of music art and dance, is the organization that holds concerts of music on international basis. It was established in 1981. Its one purpose is to hold concert of music and dance from various countries of the world, every year. So that, every year artistes from different countries will participate and present their folk music. Its manifesto is stated in the following words:

Musicians from all over the world gather together on one stage at one time to present unique workshops, exploring musical styles and techniques through discussion and performance.

The countries of Latin America, and others like Mali, Senegal, China, Uganda, Canada and States of America were represented by their dancers, singers,

instrumentalists and even poets and artistes.

In 1988, there were numerous famous artistes representing their countries. One of them was the US-born Den Delo Santa who is considered to be master of world beat. Some of his performances have been dubbed as "ground breaking". His songs were interpreted as social criticism.

The Indian dancer Alapna Sen Gupta was known for her dancing. Her husband Mick Taylor was a sitarist. She claimed that when she performed, the sentiments of hatred, love, friendship and worship danced with her.

The Texan accordion player Flaco Jimenez was a favourite artiste of all and when he finished his performance in the festival his spotless, white suit was all marked with lipstick marks. He would say with a smile, "I might show it to my wife to make her jealous."

Ali Firkatour is an artiste from Mali. His one-stringed instrument is called the instrument of Satan as he claims to make people mad by playing on it. He is claimed to be the dictionary of music and that no one could escape from listening to his music.

In 1988, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan went to participate in the annual programme. For him and his party the programme became a memorable experience as it did for the audience. According to the rules each artiste was given 20 minutes to perform. Nusrat's turn came at 11.40 pm and dressed in

muslin-thin suits of shalwar and kameez he and his party came to the stage. He started his qawwali and as it progressed the audiences from other sections gradually were drawn to his place. The time restriction was forgotten. The audiences from all over the festival now were crowded to Nusrat's qawwali. It was 4 in the morning when the muslin-clad Nusrat and his companions felt the chill of the early morning. They wanted to finish the qawwali but the audiences thrilled beyond measure cried "once more, once more".

By 5:30 Nusrat and members of his party were shivering with cold and at last the stage manager thought of a ploy. He switched off the lights and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and his party were able to leave the stage. That occasion and that year belonged to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan as all others were forgotten and bedimmed before him. Joel Dubin, a judge in the festival said in his article "World Beat from Around the Globe" that the singing of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was magical, mesmeric, divine and mystical. About Nusrat he said, "Fame has not changed him, he is the same guy. He is older but he looks younger.

## AMERICA

Someone said to mark twain, "Do you know that Columbus discovered America?"

"Yes", replied Mark Twain, "but I wish he had lost it after that."

Perhaps Mark Twain's remark was more than a mere exhibition of his characteristic wit. He was also a witness to the increasingly mechanical life of America, with its noise, violence, crime and all that. By now there has been an untold increase in these.

Yet life goes on, with its double mask, good, bad and ugly with so many who believe in love and as many who are motivated by hatred.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is however as popular in the

United States of America as he is in Japan. Here too, the people consider him a sort of a god. Here he is praised in the highest of terms. In its March 1992 issue, the Austrian magazine 'Songlines' the editor said about Nusrat. "Nusrat is a big, Buddha-like mass of man, and his husky tenor voice is as big as his body."

American newspapers have expressed similar opinions about Nusrat but the muggers in America, perhaps, do not read their newspapers. Twice they have stolen his money.

Last year he was having his dinner in a Chinese restaurant, that a thief came in and ran away with Nusrat's brief case. Later the brief case was recovered but the money in it was missing. In May, 1992 as Iqbal Naqibi was walking towards the airport someone walked in step with him and suddenly snatched away his bag and disappeared. There were 24,000 dollars in the bag.

In spite of all this, the Americans have recognised the artiste in Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and have honored him offering him the professorship in Washington University where he will deliver lectures on music from September 1992. It is a great honour and Nusrat deserves it.

Americans are crazy about Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. The Pakistani poet Shakil Akhtar, has related a bizarre incident to his friend Tahir Aslam Gora, the short story-writer, to underscore this craze. He tells that there are groups of Americans who listen to the cassette of "Must Must" in a

strange manner. He was witness to the experience in a music club in Washington. The members of the club had dressed a stout member as Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. If that person was not as stout as Nusrat he was made to wrap a lot of cloth round his waist to look like Nusrat in shalwar and kameez. This ersatz Nusrat was then made to sit on stage and to move his hands and head just like him as the cassette played in the background. The others would then dance around him, saying "once more, once more"

## Pakistan's Wall of Sound

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is a world music heavyweight in every sense of the word. "Nusrat is a big, Buddha-like mass of a man, and his husky tenor voice is as big as his body," wrote one American critic. As the world's pre-eminent exponent of devotional Sufi singing, known as Qawwali, Khan has an artistic reputation which is equal to his great bulk. Since the release of a dance version of Mustt Mustt (the track was remixed by British crew Massive Attack) in 1990 his reputation has spread to parts of the world which had never before heard of Qawwali music.



## SPAIN

Spain was under Muslim rule for more than 500 years. After the departure of Muslim from that country now only the great buildings tell us about the glorious time of their era and its great culture. The onlooker marvels at the imagination and ingenuity as well as the aesthetic sense of the architects who designed and made those buildings. As the eye is lost in wonder, the mind recalls some incidents from history and the relics of the past are lit with memories of those times.

In living history however the arrival of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan brought life to the ruins. It was like lighting a candle in an old place. The whole thing was started by Pedro Vasques of Chile. He lives in Barcelona. On November 3, 1991 he wrote a letter to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and delivered

it to him, by hand. He said in this letter that the singing of Nusrat had kindled a spiritual candle in their hearts. There are people who are interested in Sufi-ism and since Nusrat sang Sufic poetry, they wanted some guidance and lead from him. He requested Nusrat if he could manage to invite a Sufic scholar to address the group of people who had organised an association whose primary interest was Sufic practices and study of Sufic thought.

I want you to read that letter, if only to indicate how the singing of Nusrat Fateh Khan inspires people in other countries towards a better understanding of spiritual life and mysticism.

Dear Mr. Nusrat Fateh.

Firstly let me introduce myself. My name is Pedro Vasquez.

I am Chilean and at the moment living in Spain, Barcelona.

I am turning to you in order to contact with a sufic Master, Specialising in dances and Zikrs. I am member of a group of people who are very interested in Sufism.

We would like to continue and extend our apprenticeship and invite a Sufi Master in Barcelona. I am very grateful for any information, you could give me.

Let me take the opportunity to thank you for your coming to Barcelona and thus giving us the opportunity to

share the experience of the mystical Sufi music through your mastership.

If you need anything during your stay in Barcelona I am at your disposal.

May God stay in your heart always illuminating your inspiration.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Your sincerely,

The letter is an evidence of the popularity of Nusrat's singing. There is another scene, perhaps more poignant. After his show, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was taking tea outside the green-room when a middle-aged woman and a young girl came towards him, embraced him and then started crying. It went on for sometime and Nusrat was rather unnerved at it and asked, "what is the matter?" The two said that though they did not understand his language, but felt a certain melting inside. "When you sing, all our soul awakens and all our sufferings are forgotten," they said.

As they left, a video-shop owner told Nusrat that the two were the most ardent fans of the great singer and are usually among the first buyers of any recording of his music.

Nusrat, moved and deeply touched, raised his hands towards heavens, in prayers and gratitude.

The special show given by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, in

the palaces of Granada, is of great significance. The noble structures, are believed to haunted by the ghosts of old rulers and are locked since long. It was on the orders of the Spanish Queen that the palace buildings were unlocked and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was invited to perform there. It was, without doubt, a memorable concert. The corridors and the arches around the spacious chambers echoed with the voice of Nusrat, as the living audience heard the sacred names of Allah and the Holy Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh) the reverberation of those who had lived in these palaces centuries ago. People listened to Nusrat's singing to their heart's content. After the concert, the Queen gave an audience to Nusrat.

The Queen waited for Nusrat, alongwith other ladies of the court, in a special chamber. In the corridors there were rows of soldiers and guards who held in their hands the leashes and the secretary Iqbal Naqibi, entered the chamber, with trepidation, rather scared of the hounds. The Queen greeted Nusrat and praised his singing in the heartiest of terms and spoke to him through the interpreter. Nusrat presented the cassettes and CDs to the Queen on which the Queen said."

"I have them already." Nusrat was surprised, "How did you get them?"

The Queen answered: "I am old fan of yours. I saw your performance in London two years back. I had to listen."

The other ladies joined the Queen in the praise and told him that all of them were his fans, and that he is their favourite singer.

It is said, that the palaces of Grenada are only for the heads of states and Vips. Nusrat was treated as a VIP by the Queen of Spain.

12-26 Oct 1990

### SINGLES

**Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan  
mixed by Massive  
Attack**

*'Must Must' (Real World)*  
Few would have guessed that it would fall to the South West to produce what must be the world's first Moslem club hit. But here it is — searing Moslem Sufi devotional wailings from the b.a. man Nusrat and crew, placed neatly over some heavy drum 'n' bass by Bristol's own Massive Attack. This is not mere sampling or plunder though: it is a genuine and all-to-rare collaboration between some considerable musical talents. The dub treatment is often a good idea for music with regular tempos — polyrhythmic music can go a bit trashed — and Massive Attack's satute use of its classic weapons of echo and fading on the voices, tabla, and harmonium of Nusrat's sound is very effective indeed, in the vein of Augustus Pablo. Moslem dub? Give e'm the Nobel Peace Prize. (Greg Sailer)

REALWORLD



### Must Must

Sometimes, they say, a great creation, a masterpiece, a picture, a poem or a song just happens and is not deliberately brought into existence. Even the artist does not know what he is creating. But the thing created is important and memorable and bestows immortal fame to the artist.

The great poet of the sub-continent Mirza Asadullah Ghalib always praised his Persian poetry and never gave a thought to his Urdu verse. He advised his friends to read his Persian if they wanted to enjoy some of his best creative effort. But as fate will have his reputation depends entirely on his poetry in Urdu language.

The British poet lord Byron composed his poem Beppo in a rather off hand way, while changing his dress after returning from the ballroom. But the poem proved to be

a great piece of literature.

The story of the "MUST MUST" is not much different

Must Must is the favourite cassette in many countries. Everyone is humming it. From 7 to 70 years old, everyone's favourite happens to be this composition based on qawwali rhythm. You can hear it in all drawing rooms and all kinds of vehicles: taxis, wagons, trucks and pick-ups and even luxury cars. In the legends recited by the narrator Hatim Tai, the hero Hasan Shami has glimpse of his beloved says again and again, "I have seen her once and want to see her again and again." That is what happens to the listener of Must. It is not enough to listen to it again but rather again and again.

The words are not important. People of every country enjoy the composition in their manner and are effected by it the way they accept it. As Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan relates, once a group of Hindu sannyasi (those practice ascetic practices) men and women came to him introduced themselves to him as those who impart training in meditation. They sat before him cross-legged and joined their hands in a prayer-like stance and said:

"Your singing has crossed all earthly limits. It relieves the mortals of all greed and worldly ambition. The soul has an experience of salvation after going through great suffering and sacrifice."

"We sit, with closed eyes, and put on the cassette of "Allah Hoo" and "Must Must", they added, and the distance between body and soul is finished."

And there is a story behind the composition.

Peter Gabriel took Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan to his studio for mixing his voice on the sound track of the film, and with him were his brother Farrukh Fateh Ali Khan and the Tabla-Player Dildar Hussian. There in the studio, Nusrat went on reciting a number of ragas and Peter kept on recording the recital. Then Nusrat sang the tunes of Darbari raga in higher tones, rather, in his characteristic falsetto, which is rather unusual because the raga is seldom sung in higher scales. Peter liked it and put it on the sound track of the film "The last temptation of Christ"

The session went into the night. Nusrat Farrukh and Dildar were tired. As the recording came to an end, Peter Gabriel said, "I wish you could sing something with the western musical instruments." Nusrat played on the harmonium, rather in an absent minded way. Farrukh said, "Khan sahib please do something. We then go back to our rooms for some rest."

Nusrat's fingers danced on the harmonium keyboard in a lighter vein and he smiled and rendered the scale: sa re sa: ni sa pa ni ma pama ni ga re ga!

Even Dildar who was rather exhausted in the long, session laughed with Farrukh. The three did not realize the



significance of the rendition had come to Nusrat just like a light diversion. Peter liked it immensely and called on Darry Johnson and Michael Brook and James Pinker and Guo Yue with their instruments, electronic harmonium, bass and flute and started the recording.

Everyone in the studio wanted Nusrat to go on singing. That is what Nusrat did. He recorded "Sajna terey Binaah." He was not conscious of the impact that his recording would create. He rather wondered what was he doing during that session. As the composition now enjoys unprecedented popularity, he says that the recording was not done, it just happened.

The Black singer Tina Turner was there. She was impressed and desired to sing with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in a long-playing record. It is a project on which both are working. But that is for the future.

In Pakistan when the Peter Gabriel Composition was re-recorded, it surpassed all other discs and tapes in the market in popularity. It spread around like a flood swamping everyone in the sweep: Hindu, Sikhs, Christians Muslims, Japanese, and the English, all were swept off their feet by a composition, that just happened in a moment of lighter amusement, when the great artiste himself laughed at his own random rendering.

## INDIA

Nusrat had a vision of Ajmer Sharif in his dream. Now was it his deep wish to visit the great shrine to present his own reverence and express his own feeling with his 'surs'. At last when he went there he was pleasantly surprised to see that the actual place was just like what he had seen in his dream.

Once in Ajmer Sharif, Nusrat was surprised to see his dream transformed into reality. He also identified and recognized the place where Ustad Fateh Ali Khan had asked him to sit and sing. Nusrat sat there, almost in tears when the administrator of the mazar asked him to step inside and start his qawwali. Nusrat refused to go inside and insisted on singing right there where he had sung during his dream. He performed there and his skill and mastery held everyone in a spell of spiritual atmosphere. It was a heart-stopping

performance. It brought tears to the eyes of the listeners and Nusrat's name was burned into the hearts of the people there.

The mazar of Amir Khusrau has a special significance for those connected with music. It has a sentimental value for them. They believe that even if an unmusical person tastes the clay of this shrine he will be singing in tune. It is because Amir Khusrau is credited with the invention of many classical compositions, in particular the qawwali. He devised and created many new scales, the ragas, wrote countless verses and bols, the words, songs, Lyrics, ghazals and thumris. His linguistic compositions were always in consonance with the tempo and the sense of the ragas. He made countless experiments with musical compositions and is responsible for introducing a great number of innovations in the classical singing of the subcontinent. Everyone pays the respect as an acolyte to do duty to the master who lived centuries back.

When Nusrat visited the mazar of Amir Khusrau, he seemed to discover himself and felt in himself an excitement of possessing a gift that he wanted to show to everyone. He knew that the occasion was attended by the cognoscenti and the masters from India and Pakistan. Every singer present at that moment had a reason to feel proud of himself, of his knowledge and of having a trained ear. It was not the time to keep something back. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was also prepared to give his all that he had imbibed from members of

his family and from his seniors. His qawwali on that night was therefore a combination of a perfection in rendition, a clarity of enunciation and a control on the melody, all immersed in the classical music. He sang till the dawn. The audience felt as if they were under a spell. Nusrat was given a place of distinction and given the award of being the Best Qawwal. Those who loved Samaa were Nusrat fans and his name was known through the subcontinent.

The second tour of India by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan was on the occasion of the marriage of Rishi Kapoor, son of Raj Kapoor. Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and always enjoyed excellent relationship and Mubarak Ali Khan attended all the marriages in the Kapoor family. Keeping the tradition alive, Rishi therefore invited Nusrat to come to Bombay.

Bombay is the Hollywood of India and attracts people of great talent. But before recognition an artiste has to suffer and work a lot. The competition is hard and the city does not accept the new talent willingly, but once it does, it does so in style. Many people have struggled here, living in ghettos and flats, in disease and poverty. But when they made it, they were enthroned on the highest pedestal of popularity and adoration. The names are legend. Moti Lal, Dilip Kumar, Roshan, S.D. Burman, Madan Modan, Ranjinder Krishan, and Master Ghulam Haider.

As he went to Bombay, Nusrat wanted to see Naushad, the great music composer. He went to "Ashyiana"

the residence of Naushad who was ill those days. Naushad knew Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. When Nusrat went to see him at his residence, Naushad sat up and talked to him for long.

At the residence of Raj Kapoor, the marriage occasion of Rishi Kapoor was ceremonised in a prestigious manner. Among those who had come to listen to Nusrat were Dilip Kumar, Naushad, Dev Anand, Bharat Bhushan, Sara Bano, Rishi and Shammi Kapoor, Sanjay Khan, Kalyan ji, Laxmi Kant Piyarey Lal, R.D.Burman, Manna Dey, almost everyone was there.

Naushad introduced Nusrat as son of Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and said that since he had not heard him he could not give his opinion about his art.

At this, Nusrat requested Naushad to give his comments after his performance. And as Nusrat started his singing, many of his listeners did not expect much from him as they considered him only as a qawwal. They could not make any connection between qawwali and the regular classical music. Nusrat was conscious of this and thus based his qawwali on classical raga. Some of the guests who had planned to leave early, stayed to listen. The qawwali advanced step by step gradually, on the grace notes of ragas and as the night matured so did the singing and rendition of Nusrat, ranging from one scale to another, moulding the ragas to new shapes, till the morning. Nusrat had a marathon session of six hours. At the end of the session Naushad took

the mike and spoke for an hour on the style and mastery of singing of nusrat. Rishi, Dev Anand, R.D.Burman, Bharat Bhushan and other great film celebrities came forward to bow before Nusrat and acknowledge his skill. Nusrat received lots of reward and honour that night.

It so happened that alongwith the qawwali party of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, a team of wrestlers also accompanied him to India. It was a coincidence that the wrestlers' itinerary ran parallel with that of Nusrat's party. Nusrat himself is rather massive and the members of his party are also hefty people. If Nusrat and his companions could be given the wrestler's kit in the ring they would most certainly look like wreslrlers and could take on some lesser grapplers too.

The sponsor of Nusrat's tour had provided the party with a man for general duty and service. His name was Nasim. This fellow Nasim owed some money to someone and that man brought a couple of thugs with him to threaten Nasim with rough stuff if he failed to pay his debt. As they arrived at the hotel where Nusrat was staying, Nasim was terrified and told the whole story to Nusrat who stood up and came out of the hotel room with his other companions. As the small time Bombay hoods saw Nusrat and members of his party they thought that these were the wrestlers whose bouts were scheduled for the next day. They had a look on Nusrat and took to their heels. Haji Mastan Khan the host of the evening laughed his head off on hearing this. At the residents of Haji Mastan Khan, Dev Anand said about the

picturesque rendition of words by Nusrat that he and others like him were not real actors. "You", he added, "are the real actor who renders the words with complete feeling and you convey them with their intensity. I heard your father years back and I had said to the great Ustad that he was the real actor. If we are the actors, you are actor's actor."

Mukri, the comedian narrated an incident about Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. "The Ustad was large-hearted amn, a real dervesh, he was. Once he went to Lahore to sing at the Iqbal Academy and performed in such a masterly way that the audience showered currency notes on him as an expression of their appreciation. After the show, the Secretary of Iqbal Academy asked the Ustad if he could anything for the Iqbal Academy, the Ustad made a gesture towards the money heaped up before him and said that for the present he could do only that much and gave all that money to the Academy."

The concert in Birla hall was accorded even greater ovation and Nusrat came to Pakistan with as much fame and honour as was given to his father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan.

Those were early days. Now Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is known everywhere. Now almost every singer in India is singing the songs rendered by Nusrat. Nusrat's voice echoes in the streets. On the Indian TV and films, the Indian artistes are seen dancing on the tunes of Nusrat's songs. The Nusrat style is gaining in popularity by the day.

The well-known Pakistan singers Badruzzaman,

Qamaruzzaman, have returned from India after a successful tour. Badruzzaman is rather miserly in praising others but offers unstinted appreciation where it is due. When I rang him and asked about the Indian tour undertaken by two brothers, he said:

Ruby sahib, it is Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan everywhere in India. Wherever I went Nusrat was there before us. All the new singers of Delhi are cashing in on Nusrat's performances. I was so happy that at last there is one Pakistani singer whom everyone in India is following."

Such words coming from an artiste who is rather sparing in praising others, is significant.

### THREE GREAT KHANS

There is a cultural organization of Asians in Dubai. It is making preparations for a big, huge show to honour three great personalities of South Asia, The three great Khans who have created an impact in the world, with their achievements.

The Three Khans are:

Yousaf Khan (Dilip Kumar)

Imran Khan

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan



Our youth is turning away from Michael Jackson and Nusrat is leading it towards Hamad, Naat and Islamic through his charming qawwalis. Even the people in the west are not interested in spirituality being preached to them by others. They have been attracted to the message of Tauhid By Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

**CHIEF JUSTICE MIAN MEHOOB AHMED  
LAHORE HIGH COURT**

In our age, Nusrat has risen like a sun to spread his light. He will be remembered for centuries to come and his voice will resound through the corridors of time.

Aqeel Ruby deserves our praise for writing a book on the epoch-making personality of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and his art.

**MUHAMMAD PERVAIZ MASOOD  
CHIEF SECRETARY PUNJAB**

Through the ages, music has soothed the human heart and has given new direction to the taste of the people. In the modern times, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan is the great artist who represents the music of the East. With his expertise he has influenced people of all classes. Rising from native soil, this great artist has opened the mysteries of Tauheed to people of Europe, and has touched the strings of their hearts with his singing of " Allah-Hoo". He is not a mere singer but a subtle preacher too!

**CHAUDHARY SARDAR MOHAMMAD  
I.G PUNJAB.**

## Awards And Titles

- \* Shaharyar-e-Mosseqi
- \* Shahanshah-e-Qawwali
- \* Khusrau-e-Sani
- \* Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
- \* Doctor Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
- \* Professor Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
- \* Niak Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
- \* Pride Of Performance  
Presidential Award  
Government Of Pakistan
- \* Best Qawwal Graduate Award
- \* Best Qawwal 1982  
Punjab Youth Academy  
Lahore
- \* Peace Award  
Faisalabad
- \* Living Legend
- \* Guders Award Faisalabad
- \* Super Star Of Music
- \* Popular Voice Of Islam
- \* Power Of Pakistan
- \* Pakistan's Wall Of Sound

- \* A Man Called Qawwali
- \* Nusrat The Magnificent
- \* Singing Bhudda
- \* Shining Star Of Music
- \* Messenger Of Peace
- \* De Jays Award
- \* Inner Wheel Club Of Lahore
- \* The Legend Of Music World Raja Entertainers
- \* Dyccf Award
- \* Award By Cultural Association Of Pakistan
- \* Grand Prix 1989 Deola Fnac  
Real World Virging
- \* 5Th Asian Traditional Performing Art Festival  
Japan Foundation
- \* Award For Great Contribution To Qawwali  
By Pakistan Workers Association  
London
- \* Shield Presented By  
Urdu Revival And Cultural Society  
South Africa
- \* For Services To Pakistan Music  
By Pakistan Welfare Association  
Birmingham U.K.

Award Presented By His Worship Councillor  
Frank Carter  
Lord Mayor Of Birmingham





I have nothing but the dust from the mazars where the beloved of Allah sleep. I transform this dust through my surs into my songs. A recitation, a perennial recitation of the Holy names of Allah, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and Ali is my heritage. I will pass it on to the next generation. Perhaps Allah likes what I do and He has opened His gates of blessings on me. I love Him. I go far and wide with name of my Beloved on my lips. To those who do not know my language I chant Allah hoo, I sing of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and sing of Ali, the people are enchanted. I claim no skill, it is all because of the great men of Allah, when I was awarded the Grand Prix in Paris Uxi Mufti came to me in the green room and said that I possessed no skill for the honour and that it was because of the saints and the blessing of Allah.

He was right. What is man but a handful of dust and what can be do?

Myself, I am nothing. If I am anything it is because of my companions. An axe cannot chop the wood without its handle. I also cannot do anything without my companions and friends who work with me. They are as important as a thumb is in a hand.

The more honours I am given, the more afraid I become, that I might not slip in the eyes of my fans. I pray to Allah to preserve me and keep me in His favour. I need His friendship. I do not bother about the disaffection of the times.

Naheed, my wife and Nida (Nidia my daughter) are the two rulers sitting on the throne of my heart. I travel long and wide to extend their empire. But I never forget them. In my heart are two portraits. Whenever I have an opportunity I bend and see them in my heart. The strings are my heart in their hands. Farrukh and Rahat are my two eyes. I see the world through them. The world looks so beautiful. When these two eyes open it is daylight for me when they close, for the evening starts.

My father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan, Ustad Mubarak Ali Khan and Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, his brothers are my spiritual gurus. I am their son, their acolyte. It is my duty to preserve and protect the knowledge of music that they gave me. I do a lot of experiments but the base is always the classical music. I am bound with the ragas. I may road around the world and

may acquaint myself with the western instruments I never wander from the central point. From the stage of WOMAD and from the studios of Peter Gabriel, I always emerge from the depths of my own music.

The musical instruments may be western but my voice never wavers away from my own ragas. It is good to make experiments and I do a lot of them but my thoughts are always round the center and that center is the tradition of my elders and it is the classical music.

**Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan**





## Epilogue

## THE LINGERING DROPS OF RAIN

I did not talk to you because of the crowd. It was almost the whole world. Who would have listened to me ? I am in the habit of talking in whispers because that is how lovers talk. Now that everyone has left , along with Nusrat, I dare talk to you. I will with a little story of my own. I cannot otherwise, everyone wants to start with some story of his own.

When I was a child I bought a little box a money box. It was shaped like a Japanese god, round clay thing with a slit in the back. The salesman told me that if I put money into it, it will be doubled.

How is that? I asked.

"The gods never deceive. Whatever you give them they return it two-fold."

I took home that statue of the god and looked at it in the night.

The rotund face, cherubic and innocent and full of peace.

The more I looked the more happy I felt. A little of my childhood time passed in that state of mind and then the little statue was lost. I remembered it a lot and forgot about it and got myself more such money boxes. You could put money into them through the slit in the back but there was no way of getting it out. It was lost in it somewhere then one day I saw that statue again, talking, walking, looking around and singing. He put out his hand and I took it in my hand and felt a strange warmth. It was a warmth of friendship. As he moved his thin lips, they disclosed a pearly row of teeth and said, "Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan".

It was my first meeting with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in the N.N studios. After the hand-shake Nusrat put his hands on his belly in a clasp and listened to the recording of his own song. We did not talk much and kept on looking at each other. Now we talk too much and look less on each other.

In this "WE" indeed I talk more because Nusrat is rather reticent. He expresses himself more in his performance than in conversation. He keeps on thinking and people say he thinks about his music. But I have seen his silence with trepidation. There are moments when he is away from himself. He is lost somewhere away from where he seems to receive messages from far off, no one knows from where. He

has got his habit of being lost from his father Ustad Fateh Ali Khan who appeared to be somewhere else with his "third " visionary eye, into another world. Nusrat has inherited that brightness and shine of his father's eye. If one looks at Nusrat singing, there might be a trace of worldliness as he prepares to sing. But as he starts singing the world and the worldliness is left behind. His face softens and changes. The light of sur spreads around and he soars away into remote distances. The audience feels a fire in the heart. The great musician Beethoven had once said "Music should strike fire from the heart of man and bring tears from the eyes of woman." It is not given to everyone. Only those with a pure soul can do it I believe in what Beethoven has said. Whenever I have listened to Nusrat I have felt a fire in my heart like men, but I have cried like women too.

Nusrat's elder sister says that he was rather cowardly in his childhood. He would ask his four sisters to have their beds around his and he would sleep in the middle. This was when he was a child. But he still is coward.

When I went to see him in Faisalabad and we sat in his drawing room I happened to see a small lizard moving towards his sofa. Since I am a coward too I said, "Khan Sahib, There is a little lizard near your sofa." Nusrat looked around uneasily. The lizard had disappeared.

"It has gone", I said

Nusrat did not believe me and shook his dhoti again

and again. He looked around again and saw under the sofa also. He was disturbed had a last look on the rug, stood up and went in the house

Nusrat likes to have the Pakistani dishes and occasionally he relishes the Chinese cooking. He drinks only water and wears shalwar kurta during the day and wants to have his dhoti as his sleeping dress. Dhoti is a large sheet of cloth worn around the hips to cover the legs. His breakfast consists of rusks with tea and in the evening he wants to have biscuits with his tea. He eats only after his qawwali performance. It is said that he is an eater and a gourmet. It is said that the kebab-maker of Faisalabad was grateful to Nusrat because he liked Boota's kebabs and ate lots of them. That is why it is reported that Boota said about Nusrat, " If Nusrat would not have patronized me I would have been destroyed."

Nusrat believes with French writer Balzac in eating and working a lot. Balzac is said to have consumed 12 roast chicken and the result was "The Old Goriot". If Nusrat is a gourmet and an eater, we can see the result in his performances. When "Must Must " was released the western press shouted, "Nusrat should be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize."

When Nusrat goes for a performance of qawwali there are ten persons who accompany him. On his return there are usually two more in the company. messier, who

massage him till he goes to sleep.

Nusrat hates money but he cannot do without it. It is a necessity, not a craze. Perhaps wealth likes his attitude and follows him. Fame and popularity chase him like his fans welcoming him to the throne of honour.

He is an International citizen. All the people of the world consider their own. He is welcome in every city of the world but he loves his own country. Sometimes when his tour abroad is cancelled he feels a little comfort.

Nusrat knows a language that is understood by all. It is the language of music and it has bound him with the world in a universal relationship. In the center is the music, and the genres of music are his provinces and Nusrat alone is ruler.

Nusrat has many aspects: He is a child and innocent, he is young and romantic, he is a man chased by wealth, fame and popularity and he is old and pious as his eyes never wander away towards temptation or lust. There are so many sides to him and each one is novel and unique.

The night has gone. The sun is up and I beg leave of you

**Ahmed Aqeel Ruby**

## About the Author

Swarthy and mercurial Ahmed Aqeel Ruby, teacher, poet, T.V. playwright, film writer and song writer is working as Associate Professor of Urdu literature in Government F.C College Lahore. His talent lies in his spontaneity with writing poetry. He has Eight books on his credit.

His first collection Bikhre Phool was published in 1967. It showed promise of a florid imagination. Ruby moved a further to familiarize himself with a broader spectrum of poetry by translating the English "Romantic Poets" — Byron, Shelly, Keats, into Urdu verse. Ruby published a verse play which showed the breadth of his poetic talent. In 1988, he



published prose translation of Greek poetess Blitis. These translations of Ruby are rendered in a delicate lyrical style. This is not all about Ruby. He has translated the entire Greek Drama into Urdu. He has written Beautiful original poems for children. His Urdu verse translation of Nemaz does him great credit.

Born in India at Sangrur, He did his M.A in Urdu from Punjab university. He wrote two serials for T.V and many other plays. He also wrote six feature films for big screen.

Dr. Anis Nagi

### About the Translator

SAJJAD HAIDER MALIK is a distinguished writer on cultural and social topics.

Born on April 2, 1932 in Campbellpur now Attock, he did his M.A in English from Gordon College Rawalpindi, and joined Government College, Asghar Mall, Rawalpindi in 1958. He served that college for 17 years and then joined Pakistan National Council of Arts as Director of Publications, (1974-1979) upto his retirement in 1992 he taught in Gordon College, Rawalpindi, Government College, Liaquatpur, and F.C.College, Lahore.

He has worked for Radio and TV as writer and compere and has contributed for The Pakistan Times, The Muslim, Herald and Friday Times on art, music, literature, cinema and TV.

He has translated the plays of Moliere, Pagnol and the poetry of Mihai Eminescu, the Romanian poet.

He has been serving the Federal Board of Film Censors at Islamabad and Lahore, since 1975.



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**Auversicht**

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Na Pa Dha





Aqeel Ruby's personality is prismatic. As the different colors dazzle the eye, the many-splendoured Aqeel Ruby reflects the possession and understanding of poetry, drama, criticism, teaching, music, short story, novel and other branches of knowledge. He has the knack of creating a startling impression through his brilliant conversation.

And now, as a biographer of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, he has emerged in a new light.

Aqeel Ruby has presented Nusrat's life into chapters dealing with his ancestors, his early life, great struggle, artistic development, national and international fame, and his personal life. He has skillfully divided these chapters into Prologue, Dialogue, Loud Whispers, and Epilogue, thus giving an original style and shape to the art of biography.

Aqeel Ruby's style is simple, effective and interesting. It is full of mythical and emotional content. He has spread variegated aspects of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's personality in the book like splashes of color on a canvas.

As the reader connects these elements together, an attractive, touching and complete picture emerges. There is a magical impact to Ruby's style.

Really it is Ruby's touch of class.

Uxi Mufti

NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN  
A Living Legend

AHMED AQIL RUBI

WOW

# NUSRAT FATEH ALI KHAN - A Living Legend



AHMED AQIL RUBI  
SAJJAD HAIDER MALIK